THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE AFRICAN FAMINE, 1984-1986
Volume I
AN EVALUATION OF THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: SYNTHESIS REPORT

A.I.D. PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT NO. 16

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FOREWORD

The 1984-1986 drought in Africa resulted in the continent's most severe famine in recorded history. Countless lives were saved by the massive outpouring of assistance from around the world. The U.S. response to this crisis was larger than that of any other donor nation as a result of the concerted efforts of numerous government agencies, private voluntary organizations, businesses, and U.S. citizens.

This two-volume assessment was commissioned to reflect on and record the lessons learned from our response to the emergency. Volume II, An Evaluation of the Emergency Food Assistance Program: Synthesis Report, is a detailed examination of U.S.-financed food assistance in Mali, Chad, and Sudan. Volume II, An Analysis of Policy Formation and Program Management, focuses on policy and management issues including legislation and funding, early warning systems, donor relations, the role of the commercial sector, public and congressional relations, and the transition to development.

The lessons learned from this emergency should guide us in responding to such disasters and provide insights for determining the actions necessary to abate the ravages of future droughts.

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enabling the team to make practical, positive recommendations for the future. Our special thanks also to Judith Gilmore, the A.I.D. Project Officer, for her effort. Her hard work and many contributions have helped shape the results in many important ways.

Representatives of the Governments of Chad, Mali, and Sudan, the USAID Missions, the U.S. Embassies, private voluntary organizations, and U.N. agencies in those countries all gave generously of their time, despite their heavy work loads. Without their help it would have been impossible to cover the ground necessary in the 3 weeks spent in each country.

We would also like to thank Corrine Whittaker for her research work on Section 1 of the report. To Esther Robb, who served as production manager, we express our great appreciation for her many extra hours and the spirit with which she gave them.

Dennis H. Wood
Project Executive Officer

SUMMARY

AFRICAN EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE: POLICY CONTEXT, U.S. RESPONSE, AND U.S. OBJECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

At the height of the African drought in January 1985, President Reagan announced a major African Hunger Relief Initiative and, as part of this initiative, a "Food for Progress" policy. Both were aimed at solving Africa's long-term food and agricultural problems -- while also addressing short-term food problems -- through economic policy reforms, research, training, improved rural infrastructure, and private sector involvement. Reagan's action focused renewed attention on the great problems facing many African countries as the result of a 20-year decline in per capita food production and drought conditions in regions south of the Tropic of Capricorn.

The resolution of Africa's food problems will require long-term development efforts. The closely interrelated problems of declining per capita food production, persistent drought, and emergency food crises in Sub-Saharan Africa are among the most difficult development challenges facing our generation. The major drought experienced by Sub-Saharan Africa in 1982-1985 severely affected 21 countries, set back the development process by years, and critically affected the lives of millions of people -- particularly in isolated rural areas. Although the capacity of many African nations to address food shortages had improved in the decade between the drought years of 1973-1974 and 1984-1985, these countries were faced with the overwhelming crisis of millions of hungry and starving persons in 1984-1985. Fortunately, the world community responded with emergency food and assistance, which saved millions of lives. In an extraordinary effort, the United States, through public and

private initiatives, shipped over 3 million tons of food, matched by another 3 million tons provided by other donor nations. This immense response saved millions of lives and reduced the suffering of millions more. Despite the heroic effort, however, many died and hundreds of thousands suffered severely.

In 1986, the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) commissioned evaluations of the 1984-1985 U.S. response to the African food emergency to identify lessons learned in responding to this disaster, to suggest ways for the United States and other donors to respond more effectively to food emergencies in the future, and to relate emergency food aid programs better to the longer term development effort in Africa. Several key lessons have emerged from these evaluations.

First, it is clear that the widespread droughts and emergency food crisis that affected large parts of Africa in 1968-1974 and 1982-1985 are not extraordinary episodes separate from the development process taking place on the continent. The problems and setbacks caused by drought among rural populations can and should be seen as a syndrome of inadequate income growth and not just as drought-induced manifestations of hunger, malnutrition, and ill health among vulnerable population groups, which is the common perception.

A second lesson is that development programs must consider the problems of drought-prone areas and must anticipate and preplan for food emergencies, particularly those that may affect isolated, hard-to-reach rural areas. Development programs must focus on the need for information to track the food and agricultural situation of rural areas more closely and reliably. Such information is essential for development planning as well as food security and emergency food assistance planning.

Third, African nations can, with early information, anticipate the need for emergency food assistance programs and preplan accordingly, taking into account the development context in which such programs occur. With external help, African nations can cope with existing chronic food deficits and prevent them from developing into critical emergencies. Flexibility in the use of food aid, as is available to a considerable degree under PL 480, will be necessary to provide for multiyear programming such as Title II, Section 206 -- in concert with other donors -- to address the needs of individual countries in ways that are appropriate to their specific development situations.

While efforts are underway to manage and focus information-gathering, preplanning, and the capacity to manage drought-caused emergencies, African governments, the United States, and other donors can expect food emergencies to continue for the foreseeable future. Key U.S. objectives for the future, then, must be to accomplish the following:

-- Help ensure that food emergency situations are anticipated and responded to effectively before they assume crisis proportions

-- Achieve equitable donor and host government sharing of the responsibility for dealing with food emergencies

-- Realize the desired impact from emergency food assistance efforts -- saving lives, reducing suffering, and fostering additional longer term development

-- Attain cost-effective results from emergency food assistance efforts

-- Know, document, and report the results of emergency food assistance programs

A specific strategy and recommendations for achieving these objectives are described later in this summary.

EVALUATION RESULTS

A tremendous contribution was made by the U.S. emergency food assistance effort in Sudan, Mali, Chad, and 17 other countries in Africa in 1984-1985. This assistance was critical to most of the 30 million people seriously at risk on the African continent. In only the three countries evaluated in depth, 6 million people in Sudan, 2 million in Mali, and over 1 million in Chad were assisted in coping with the worst food crisis of written record. Moreover, the effort was undertaken in the context of a continentwide disaster requiring the careful weighing of priorities and the stretching of available resources and their rapid mobilization.

The massive U.S. food emergency assistance response resulted in numerous positive program features that can be built on in fashioning programs for future food emergencies. The evaluation also identified program areas that can be improved to enhance the impact of such future efforts. This review of program elements that can be improved should not detract from the critical contribution made by U.S. famine relief efforts in 1984-1985.

1. Food Distribution -- Channels and Modes

U.S. success in providing food to hungry rural people in Sudan, Mali, and Chad resulted in part from identifying channels -- such as private voluntary organizations (PVOs), governments, international organizations, and the private sector -- to distribute massive amounts of food in each country to remote rural areas. For example, developing successful efforts in Mali required intensive collaboration by the host government at all levels, by PVOs, the USAID Mission, other donors, international organizations, and the private sector. Although the mix varied, the successful ingredients in these three countries were PVOs, the private sector, and regional/local governments. Much of the attention of these entities was focused on removing or working around logistical constraints.

All distribution modes -- food for work, monetization, general distribution, and so forth -- were used to achieve impact objectives effectively in certain circumstances in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. However, as illustrated in Chad, food-for-work and specialized feeding programs, which are directed toward individuals or households, enabled beneficiaries to be reached

more regularly with needed food. General distribution was effective in numerous circumstances, including many areas in Mali and Sudan, but sufficient monitoring was needed to make it so. Monetization can be very effective (e.g., Mali and Chad), especially in urban areas. Use of commercial markets to monetize emergency food assistance in urban areas was successful and a key component of the overall impact achieved in Sudan, Mali, and Chad.

2. Host Governments

Host governments can be very effective in coordinating emergency food responses, as was the case in Chad, but most have limited capabilities to manage such efforts or to effectively carry out operational activities such as food distribution. Strengthening these capabilities, especially in chronic-drought countries, helps foster government commitment to deal with food emergencies; the existence of a more capable host government, such as in Mali, can result in its undertaking more responsibility for coping with the emergency.

3. Donor Coordination

Fully effective coordination among donors was not achieved in all cases (e.g., Sudan), but where coordination was best, the impact of emergency food assistance programs was enhanced (e.g., Mali and Chad). Donor coordination was most effective when begun prior to or early in the drought cycle and, as in Mali, when donors were collectively involved in identifying and assessing a food emergency. Donor coordination is maximized when both USAID Missions and A.I.D./Washington play active roles and when the host government is the principal coordinating agent at central, regional, and local levels (as in Chad).

4. Private Voluntary Organizations

Indigenous and foreign private voluntary organizations played a vital role in emergency food assistance efforts in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. They were a major factor enabling successful distribution of massive volumes of food in rural areas. Their role included, but was not limited to, identifying groups and areas in need of emergency food, targeting and distributing food, monitoring the distribution and end use of food, and collaborating with government, donors, and international agencies. These activities involved several modes of food distribution such as general feeding, resettlement, food for work, and supplemental feeding. The participation of PVOs with host governments, USAID Missions, other donors, and international organizations enhanced cost-effectiveness and overall program results. PVO work in increasing the developmental impact of emergency food assistance could be substantial.

5. Private Sector

The private sector played an effective role in Sudan, Mali, and Chad, principally in logistics. The contribution of the private sector can be expanded as a means of lightening the burden of public sector institutions and increasing the impact of emergency food assistance programs. Increased USAID Mission authority to contract for private sector resources and more

experience in using them will increase the contribution of this sector to emergency food assistance efforts.

6. Targeting

Targeting individuals, households, or areas in need of food increased the impact and cost-effectiveness of emergency food assistance. This was especially apparent in Chad, which used rapid nutritional surveillance extensively. The use of both socioeconomic and nutrition/health data for targeting throughout a food emergency cycle maximizes program impact and cost-effectiveness.

7. Preparedness and Key Information

In Sudan, Mali, and Chad in 1984-1985, there was a striking lack of preparedness despite its being the third or fourth year of the drought. Host governments, USAID Missions, and other donors had done virtually no preplanning for another year without rain. Dealing with a severe drought cost effectively and in a timely manner was extremely difficult in all these countries.

The key information needed for baseline development, early warning, needs assessment, targeting, and impact assessment was unavailable, untimely, or inaccurate in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. As a result, for example, needs assessments in each country were far off the mark, a factor that affected all aspects of planning and implementation. In addition, accurate impact assessment was impossible due to the lack of baseline data. Lack of key information contributed to the untimeliness of responses to the drought in all three countries. Without adequate and accurate information, neither the host government nor donors were willing to act decisively.

Traditional coping mechanisms, such as sharing of food, using famine foods, moving cattle to different locations, sending family members out to find wage work, and migrating, greatly reduced suffering and saved many lives in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. These mechanisms extended distribution of emergency food over time (e.g., by supplementing it with famine foods) and to others (by sharing). Traditional paternalistic relationships whereby village leaders allocate food among those in the villages also were an effective form of sharing emergency food, especially in Chad and Sudan. Because coping mechanisms were very effective, shortfalls in reaching target levels of emergency food distribution did not have the negative impact some had feared. For example, many people in all three countries depended solely on famine foods for extended periods of time. Better information about these coping mechanisms will assist in the design and implementation of emergency food assistance programs.

The African famine occurred in stages in Sudan, Mali, and Chad, and people affected coped differently with each stage. If understood in the context of the stage of famine in which they occur, these responses (e.g., selling jewelry, sending a family member away to find work, moving in with relatives, or moving the entire household) can be used to guide famine relief planning and as a trigger for appropriate food aid interventions.

8. A.I.D. Management

Given the limited staff resources applied to the emergency, USAID Missions in Sudan, Mali, and Chad achieved a great deal. However, the management of emergency food assistance programs by USAID Missions and A.I.D./Washington was attempted in Sudan, Mali, and Chad within normal development channels and mostly by persons with little or no food emergency management experience. A further management hindrance was that USAID Missions were understaffed as well. Thus, although food emergencies are particularly amenable to good management and experience, USAID Missions and A.I.D./Washington used less of both than was immediately available to them. This lack of personnel experience, lack of special administrative and funding procedures, and understaffing reduced program impact and cost-effectiveness.

9. Linkage Between Emergency Food Assistance and Development

In Sudan, Mali, and Chad the same problem, lack of adequate income, is at the root of both underdevelopment and food emergencies. Thus, there are two key links between development and food emergencies: whether development programs are designed to preclude such emergencies and whether emergency food assistance is designed to be developmental (i.e., aimed at increasing income immediately and in the longer term). Development programs in these countries were not aimed at increasing the economic well-being of groups most vulnerable to drought (e.g., Mali). When drought occurred, the income of these groups collapsed, leading to famine and necessitating emergency food assistance for them. Nor were most emergency food assistance programs (except for resettlement efforts in Chad and minor food-for-work projects in Mali) designed to meet immediate food/income needs while also producing household, local, or national assets that could increase income over the longer term. Thus, as valuable and important as both development and food emergency programs were in these three countries, none of the three programs focused effectively on the linkages between development and food emergency situations.

10. Packaging of Resources

Emergency food assistance alone was not enough in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. Other resources (e.g., money, transport, tools, seed, and technical assistance) were necessary to make effective use of the emergency food. Certain distribution modes, such as resettlement in Chad, required a broader mix and larger amount of these additional resources than did general food distribution in Mali and Sudan. Where these resources are available and appropriately combined with food assistance, the impact of the emergency food program will be enhanced.

In Sudan and Mali, general feeding was carried out for an extended period without being complemented with supplemental feeding inputs. This substantially reduced the impact of the overall effort on the most vulnerable of those affected by the drought -- especially the children.

Health inputs were not provided initially with the emergency food assistance in Sudan, Mali, or Chad. In Chad this was because the health infrastructure was so limited. In Sudan and Mali, the lack of integration of health inputs with emergency food assistance was due to poor program design. This lack of

health-related inputs also reduced the effectiveness of emergency assistance efforts, especially in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

11. Measurement

In Sudan, Mali, and Chad, initial lack of monitoring resulted in not knowing what the programs were achieving and what changes were needed to improve their impact. Monitoring, which was implemented very late in all three countries, was used primarily to ensure that specific procedures were being followed. Because evaluation was not built into the three programs initially, there was no attempt by any of them to establish baselines or to obtain or develop information that would enable program impact to be determined and assessed.

STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING U.S. EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Strategy

The evaluation of the African emergency food assistance program suggests ways to realize U.S. emergency food assistance objectives over the next decade. First, a reinforcement of the U.S. policy aimed at solving Africa's long-term food and agricultural problems is needed. Second, this reinforcement can be achieved by a redirection of U.S. strategy to help vulnerable African low-income countries, pending such development, to avoid or contain widespread food emergencies by preplanning for and anticipating food shortfalls so they do not build up to crisis proportions. Third, this strategy of focusing on the most food-vulnerable of African low-income countries should be based on a partnership approach with other major donors, country governments, and PVOs. Fourth, the evaluation of the U.S. response to the African famine yielded the following six strategy elements for helping those African governments concerned and for realizing U.S. emergency food assistance objectives in the future.

- Develop key information as a central basis for emergency food assistance responses and for early identification of impending emergency situations.
- Ensure excellent management of emergency food assistance efforts -- from preparedness through evaluation.
- Reinforce linkages between emergency food assistance and longer term development.
- Build host government capabilities and commitments to deal with food emergencies.
- Strengthen donor coordination in this effort.
- Monitor and evaluate the effort and food emergency responses closely.

Recommendations

1. Preplanning and Key Information Needs

-- A.I.D./Washington should select the most vulnerable countries{1} for preplanning and early warning system emphasis; consideration also should be given to regional organizations with capabilities to support early warning systems.

-- For selected countries, USAID Missions and other key actors should assist the host country in documenting the state of preplanning, design a preplan system, and establish the elements of the preplan.

-- USAID Missions in selected countries should include in their Country Development Strategy Statement a section on drought planning that would

  - Show the relationship of planned development assistance to at-risk groups and drought-prone areas

  - Specify existing preplans and action plans for responding to drought

  - Show how emergency food assistance will be used developmentally if it is needed

-- A.I.D./Washington should continue efforts in selected countries to expand USAID Mission capability to analyze and evaluate needs assessments.

-- USAID Missions should assist host governments in strengthening or creating systems for providing information necessary to assess needs and for making the needs assessment.

-- A.I.D. should urge and help host governments to accomplish the following:

  - Institute standard periodic surveys of drought-prone areas

  - Provide for at least an annual scrutiny of relief and emergency food needs of their rural communities and the evolving development situation

  - Undertake, simultaneously with the needs assessment, a detailed analysis of the country's logistical capacity

-- A.I.D./Washington should work with USAID Missions immediately to document stages-of-drought responses to develop appropriate indicators for an early warning system in the selected countries. These efforts should concentrate on identifying socioeconomic indicators that reflect the income and wealth status of at-risk households. These should trigger appropriate food aid interventions.

{1} In 1984-1985, 10 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 80 percent of U.S. food shipments:

Burkino Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, and Sudan. Other countries warranting consideration for assistance include Senegal, Lesotho, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zaire (Shaba Province), and Zambia.

2. Management: From Preparedness Through Evaluation

A.I.D./Washington

-- A.I.D. should establish a computerized roster of Agency personnel and private sector firms who have had previous experience in managing emergency food and nonfood assistance programs. Special procedures should be developed to permit transfer and use of these resources as needed.

-- A.I.D. should pre-establish special procedures and administrative channels for carrying out the food emergency action plans of USAID Missions, especially incremental shipments of food to meet impending emergencies; the Africa Bureau, with the A.I.D. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance, should preplan for the eventuality of another big multicountry and multiyear drought in Sub-Saharan Africa, including standby arrangements for fast-track decision-making and mobilization of resources.

-- Given an emergency, A.I.D. should increase its delegation of authority to its Missions to reduce administrative delays. For example, an allocation of $3 to $5 million to each USAID Mission in affected

countries to be used to accelerate the response to the emergency would enable early action. Such an allocation should be complemented by temporary duty assignments of necessary contracting and legal assistance personnel.

-- A.I.D. should prepare and issue a new operational manual and guidance for USAID Missions to include guidelines for the following:

- Preplanning, early warning systems, program identification and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

- Strengthening host government capability to manage drought disaster and food emergency situations, particularly in rural areas

- Encouraging cooperation/coordination with other donors

- Involving the private sector and PVOs in emergency food assistance programs

- Linking drought planning and emergency food assistance programs to development

Host Governments

-- Host governments should play a pivotal role in managing and coordinating food emergency assistance efforts. USAID Missions should not bypass the host governments (even those with limited capabilities) in the decision-making process. This is especially important in chronic-deficit countries in order to build up public sector capacity to respond to future food emergencies.

-- Central governments of host countries should be encouraged to extend their emergency food assistance coordinating efforts down to regional and district levels, drawing on help from PVOs, international organizations, and donors.

-- A.I.D. and PVOs should encourage local government participation in and implementation of food allocations, food-for-work projects, and other local aspects of food emergency programs.

Private Voluntary Organizations

-- PVOs (indigenous and foreign) should be key actors in all stages of emergency food assistance programs -- identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Their efforts should be supported

jointly by the host government, other donors, and USAID Missions and monitored by the organizational structure agreed upon to manage the emergency food effort.

-- USAID Missions should finance as appropriate and cooperate fully with PVOs as channels to help the host government develop distribution systems and manage distribution of food to rural areas.

-- For the most vulnerable countries, A.I.D./Washington should work out preset standby arrangements with one or more PVOs to ensure their rapid response when a food emergency is identified.

Private Sector

-- Private sector resources (e.g., transport companies) should be used to help meet emergency food assistance needs whenever feasible to lighten the load on already seriously overburdened governments.

-- USAID Missions in the most at-risk countries should prepare, as part of their preplanning effort, an inventory of private sector resources that could be used during a food emergency. Specific means for using such resources should be included in each USAID Mission's preliminary action plan.

Program Design

-- USAID Missions, in working with host governments and other donors on the kinds of food distribution mechanisms to be used, should emphasize modes that

target beneficiaries specifically, given the circumstances involved; although general distribution can be targeted effectively, food-for-work, supplemental feeding, resettlement, and similar programs usually are better targeted on specific households and should be the preferred modes; where general feeding is used, USAID Missions should work with the host government, PVOs, and other donors to carefully target and monitor such efforts.

-- USAID Missions should select distribution modes most appropriate both to enhance development and to meet emergency food needs; first preference should be given to food for work, cash for work, and other modes that directly increase household, village, or national productive assets; special consideration should always be given to converting free general distribution into locally managed food-for-work or cash-for-work activities. Adequate resources for materials, supervision, and technical assistance should be provided.

-- General and supplemental feeding and health care should be programmed together as part of USAID Missions' preliminary action plans; mechanisms for providing supplemental feeding and health care in rural areas should be identified and preset as a part of the preplanning process in the most at-risk countries.

-- Targeting of emergency food assistance should be a priority and based on nutrition/health and socioeconomic criteria. Socioeconomic criteria should be used when the impact of a drought has not reached the stage of severe malnutrition and to complement health/nutrition criteria whenever possible.

-- Traditional coping mechanisms should be understood so that responses to drought can be interpreted accurately and to enable these factors to be accounted for in program planning and implementation and to avoid creation of dependency.

3. Linkage of Emergency Food Assistance to Longer Term Development

-- Emergency food assistance efforts should aim to increase beneficiary income both in immediate terms and in the longer run. Emergency uses of food that increase household, local, or national assets while meeting immediate nutritional needs should be preferred.

-- Food emergency activities should be used to deliberately retain beneficiaries where their development potential is highest. This will usually be in situ, but that is not a panacea. Resettlement sites, as in Chad, or even camps may provide better opportunities to use food for development than would an in situ approach.

-- Where appropriate in chronic-drought countries, development activities should focus on groups vulnerable to drought-caused income collapse as one direct means of

avoiding recurring famine.

-- USAID Missions in the most vulnerable countries should increase food-for-work or cash-for-work efforts (in conjunction with monetized food assistance) in chronic drought-prone areas prior to and as part of emergency food responses; USAID Missions in each of these countries should experiment with local or village management of such projects to identify ways to expand them quickly during food emergencies; and specific food-for-work, cash-for-work, and other projects that use food to produce household, local, or national productive assets should be developed in advance to be

used as necessary in drought-prone areas.

4. Increasing Host Government Capabilities and Commitment To Deal With Food Emergencies

-- USAID Missions should work with host governments and other donors to design emergency food assistance programs to support the development process by building central and regional government capability and competence to plan for and manage emergency food and disaster relief programs and by involving local and district government institutions in planning and implementing such programs.

-- USAID Missions in countries with chronic food deficits should work as closely as possible with the host government and other donors to develop a national food strategy and integrated food and agricultural development programs; a joint plan for emergency food assistance should be prepared in light of the national food strategy and ongoing food and agricultural programs.

5. Strengthening Donor Coordination

-- USAID Missions should support donor coordination by the host government even if its administrative capability is weak. Full support from A.I.D., other donors, and the United Nations should be provided to assist the government in fulfilling this role. If this is not feasible, an international agency (e.g., World Food Program) is the second choice

-- Donor coordination should be started at the preplanning/ drought-proofing stages, and all major donors should participate in the needs assessment from the outset to obtain more rapid agreement on the magnitude of the problem.

-- A.I.D./Washington should assume primary responsibility for coordination between capitals/headquarters of donors, particularly as it concerns level of support. USAID Missions should ensure coordination at the country level to avoid duplication, encourage sharing of tasks, establish priorities, and so forth.

-- A.I.D./Washington and USAID Missions should work with

host governments, the United Nations, major donors, PVOs, and the private sector to develop integrated emergency food assistance plans with firm time schedules for the delivery of the materials, equipment, manpower, and food needed to mitigate the effects of the emergency.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Emergency Food Assistance Activities

-- Detailed monitoring and evaluation of A.I.D./Washington's continuous effort to improve emergency food assistance programs should be undertaken during actual food emergencies; USAID Mission staff should be expanded when necessary to improve monitoring results, and programs should include a provision for evaluation.

-- USAID Missions and other donors should help host governments strengthen their capability to monitor food emergency assistance programs.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRICARE - U.S. nongovernmental organization

A.I.D. - Agency for International Development

CCAV - Coordination Committee for Emergency Aid

CILSS - Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel

CNAVSV - National Committee for Aid to Drought Victims (Mali)

CONCASED - Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee (Chad)

EEC - European Economic Community

FANA - Food Aid National Administration

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization

GDP - gross domestic product

LICROSS - League of International Red Cross

MLCCN - Ministry for Control of National Disasters (Chad)

MSF - Medecins san Frontieres

MT - metric tons

OFDA - Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

OPAM - National Grain Marketing Board (Mali)

ONC - National Cereals Office (Chad)

OXFAM - Oxford Famine Relief Organization

PVO - private volunteer organization

REDSO - A.I.D. Regional Economic Development Services Office

SECADEV - Secours Catholique et Developpement

UNDP - United Nations Development Program

UNDRO - United Nations Disaster Relief Organization

UNEOS - United Nations Office of Emergency Operations - Sudan

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

USAID - U.S. Agency for International Development field Mission

USDA - U.S. Department of Agriculture

WFP - World Food Program

WVRO - World Vision Relief Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

This section outlines the general scope of the evaluation and sets the context for a synthesis of the individual country studies. This section also summarizes the purpose and methodology of the evaluation and describes the extent of the African food problem and the U.S. response for all of Sub-Saharan Africa.

1.1 Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The principal objectives of the evaluation were as follows:

-- Assess the timeliness, appropriateness, and impact of emergency food aid programs in Africa and suggest ways they can be improved

-- Assist USAID Missions, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), host governments, and other donors in the programming of future emergency, rehabilitation, and disaster prevention activities

-- Provide A.I.D. and the donor community with lessons learned regarding the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of emergency aid programs, with emphasis on how they can more effectively foster long-term development initiatives and contribute to increased food security.

The generic scope of the evaluation (see Appendix A) illustrates the many issues addressed during the preparation, field work, and writing of the three country reports and this synthesis report. (Summaries of the three country reports are included in Appendix B; the reports will be published separately as A.I.D.Evaluation Special Studies.)

Methodologically, the evaluation team divided up to carry out country evaluations in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. Each country team depended on secondary source reviews, interviews, and observations in Washington and in its respective country. Upon completion of the three country evaluations, a core team prepared this report, which synthesizes the central lessons learned from the three country studies (Section 2), then draws on them and on other sources to develop generic lessons learned (Section 3). The lessons learned are designed to bring out practical suggestions for dealing with food emergency situations in the future.

1.2 Nature and Scope of the Emergency

In November 1984, Sub-Saharan Africa suffered the effects of the most severe drought and famine in its history. Harvests in 1984-1985 were below average in nearly every country, and many countries were experiencing their third, fourth, or more consecutive years of drought (Department of State, A.I.D. 1985). Twenty-one countries were listed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as most severely affected (FAO 1985). Although total food production in Sub-Saharan Africa dropped only 3 percent between 1981-1982 and 1983-1984, per capita food production dropped 8 percent during the same period (USDA 1984) as population growth averaged 3.1 percent a year. Those countries most severely affected by the 1983 drought had experienced an average fall in grain production per capita of 2 percent per year between 1970 and 1984 (World Bank 1984). This decline was aggravated by factors such as war and civil strife.

Out of a total population of approximately 380 million in the Sub-Saharan region (World Bank 1984), between 150 and 200 million people were at risk -- at least 30 million of them being seriously threatened (Department of State, A.I.D. 1985). Figures on populations and death rates due to the famine are very difficult to obtain, although an indicator is the estimate that 100,000 persons died of starvation in Mozambique alone in 1984 (Ebel1985).

The affected population was particularly susceptible to drought complications because of severe poverty and relative isolation. An average of 80 percent of the Sub-Saharan African population lives in rural areas and consists primarily of subsistence farmers and low-income households. Today, four out of five Africans depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Nevertheless, agriculture's average contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of most Sub-Saharan African countries declined from 42 percent in the 1960s to 22 percent in 1980 (Ebel 1985). Approximately 20 percent of the African population consumes less than the diet needed to remain in good health -- 100 million people are estimated to be severely hungry or

malnourished. The World Bank estimates that between 65 and 80 percent of Africans will be living below the poverty line by 1995 due to an estimated 0.7 percent annual fall in per capita GDP for Sub-Saharan Africa over the next decade. In addition, in 1984 Africa had approximately 400,000 refugees (World Bank 1984). This figure is undoubtedly higher following the population displacements resulting from the drought.

Actual food imports in Sub-Saharan Africa in 1984 totaled 20,099.043 million metric tons (MT) -- a 240 percent increase over 1981 imports and a 95 percent increase over the 1981-1984 import average. Actual food imports in 1985 totaled approximately 12.273 million MT (of which 48 percent was noncommercial food aid). This represents a 114-percent increase over 1981 imports and a 19-percent increase over the 1981-1984 import average (FAO 1980-1984; 1986). Initial U.S. Department of Agriculture and A.I.D. estimates of 1984-1985 food aid needs to maintain the predrought status quo called for approximately 4.5 million MT of food from the world donor community for the 1984-1985 crop year (USDA 1984 and 1985). These tonnages were to be distributed on a continent of 8.574 million square miles (slightly over three times the area of the United States) that lacked the necessary port, inland transportation, communication, and social services infrastructure and therefore required substantial additional assistance in areas such as transportation and health care.

1.3 Extent of the U.S. Response

The U.S. response to this crisis in fiscal year (FY) 1985 was enormous, amounting to over 3 million MT, of which nearly 2 million MT was emergency food aid and over 1 million MT was regular food aid. This represented a 130-percent increase in food aid contributions from 1983-1984 for the Sub-Sahara. The total value of the food aid was over $1.08 billion, 60 percent of which was emergency or grant assistance targeted at people severely affected by the drought. The emergency aid was furnished through the PL 480 Title II and Section 416 programs, supplemented by the release of the Food Security Wheat Reserve. The total emergency food contribution was valued at $770 million including freight (Smith 1985). Additional contributions were provided through carryover commitments from FY 1984. A substantial portion of this assistance was provided to Sudan, Mali, and Chad. Table 1 illustrates the relative country and contribution size.

Total food contributions from the U.S. Government to Sub-Saharan Africa represented nearly 50 percent of the overall tonnage provided by the donor community as a whole and twice as much as was provided by the second largest donor -- the European Economic Community (Department of State, A.I.D. 1985). U.S. food aid was supplemented with food distribution assistance provided by the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the amount of $90 million for transport and $1.8 million in services provided by the Department of Defense (Smith 1985) In addition, approximately $125 to $200 million in emergency aid was provided to Sub-Saharan Africa by the U.S. public through private voluntary organizations, churches, schools, corporations, and individuals. The private sector contribution amounts to 18 percent of total U.S. commodity and noncommodity food assistance.

This illustrates both the generous efforts of the U.S. public and the critical role of the U.S. programs.

Table 1. Emergency Food Assistance Provided by A.I.D. and Other Donors in 1984-1985 (FY 1985) to Sudan, Mali, and Chad and Sub-Saharan Africa as a Whole

Population Country/ as of 10/3/85	U.S. Region	Size (million) sq. miles)	Emergency Food Assistance (000's MT) Total PL 480 Titles (est.)	Committed Title I & II	Title III	Other Donors
Sudan 986,000	21.5	319	591	391		1301
Mali 478,000 272	8.3		None	95		177{a}
Chad 496,000	4.0-5.0	None	75	135		210
Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) 8,574,000{b}	380{b}		918,423{c}	1,770.5{c}	3,713.3{c}	5,483.8

{a} FAO 1986.

{b} World Bank 1984.

{c} US Department of State, A.I.D., 1987 Congressional Presentation. (A.I.D. amount covers FY 1985 Title I and II. Total food aid to Africa in 1985, including Section 416 and Food Security Wheat Reserve Commodities, was over 3.0 million MT.)

Source: Emergency food assistance program country studies for Sudan, Mali, and Chad.

The total value of food and nonfood emergency assistance to Africa in FY 1985 (including all OFDA funds) was roughly twice the value of development assistance (excluding that from the Economic Support Fund) to Sub-Saharan Africa during the same period.

2. THREE COUNTRY REPORTS -- A SYNTHESIS OF LESSONS LEARNED

2.1 Why Sudan, Mali, and Chad Were Chosen for Field Evaluations

Sudan, Mali, and Chad were selected for evaluation of their emergency food assistance programs for 1984-1985 because they accounted for 40 percent of U.S. food aid to Sub-Saharan Africa and were representative of the drought and famine situations that faced many countries in the Sahel and, more generally, in a broad band across Africa south of the Tropic of Capricorn. The year 1984-1985 was the fourth year of drought for Sudan and Chad and the fourth in 5 years for Mali.

Sudan is the largest country in Africa geographically (a little less than 1 million square miles -- the size of the United States east of the Mississippi), with a population of 21.5 million.

In normal years it is a food-surplus country exporting sorghum to the Middle East. Sudan has had little history of drought, so adequate Government mechanisms for dealing with the drought were limited. The change of Government in early 1985, civil unrest in Southern Sudan, substantial numbers of refugees from Ethiopia and Chad, and budgetary problems added to the difficulties of responding to emergency food assistance needs. In FY 1985 the United States provided 67 percent of Sudan's emergency food assistance.

Mali is the size of Texas, New Mexico, and Kansas (478,000 square miles), with a population of 8.3 million. It is a chronic food-deficit country with mechanisms in place for dealing with drought. Mali is landlocked, which increased the lead time required to deliver emergency food shipments and generally made logistics difficult. In FY 1985 the United States provided 35 percent of Mali's emergency food assistance.

Chad is the size of Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado (496,000 square miles), with a population of 4 to 5 million. In recent years it has required food imports and is likely to continue to need them for the next few years. Impressive coordination mechanisms were set up by the Government of Chad between itself, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and major donor countries. The recent civil war, Libyan troops occupying the northern third of Chad, a newly reestablished civil service, and damage and deterioration to the limited infrastructure made implementation of the program difficult. Chad is also landlocked. In FY 1985 the United States provided 36 percent of Chad's emergency food assistance.

2.2 Analysis and Synthesis: Lessons Learned and Specific Recommendations

This subsection presents lessons learned as distilled from the three country evaluation reports (see Appendix B), a brief discussion of relevant country findings, and several specific

recommendations. The lessons learned and recommendations are presented under the following subject matter areas:

- -- Preparedness: preplanning and contingency planning
- -- Donor coordination
- -- Needs assessment
- -- Project design
- -- Distribution mechanisms
- -- Management
- -- Timing
- -- Impact (elements that affect it)
- -- Monitoring and evaluation
- -- Development/emergency food assistance linkages

Under these 10 headings, 48 lessons learned were drawn from the detailed findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the country evaluations. These lessons learned have in turn been used to frame specific recommendations under each heading, addressed primarily to A.I.D.. In working with these 10 headings, it occasionally has been useful to repeat information set out earlier.

For example, some issues related to timing are also important in project design. Donor coordination is important in considering preplanning and needs assessment as well as program design.

2.2.1 Preparedness: Preplanning and Contingency Planning

Lessons Learned

- -- Preplanning is essential to more effective emergency food distribution programs and must be undertaken before there is a food emergency problem.
- -- Stages-of-drought analysis is an important but generally unrecognized tool for preplanning and identification of impending food emergencies.
- -- Baseline information and data are essential. Preplanning is required to collect the key information needed to assist the at-risk population in disaster areas.
- -- Selection of key decision-makers ahead of time is important.
- -- Early warning is critical for preparedness but is not yet reliable nor sufficient for emergency food planning and preplanning. Early warning systems need to incorporate periodic reviews of the food and

agricultural situation in drought-prone areas by

regional, district, and local government personnel, who should be backed up by specialists provided by the central government.

-- USAID Missions should ensure that the information available to them prior to and at the beginning of a food emergency is linked directly to the guidelines for deciding when a food emergency exists.

Discussion

After many consecutive years of drought in Sudan, Chad, and Mali, the lack of preparedness was striking in all three countries, both for the drought and for emergency food shortages in rural areas, whose traditional village stocks had been exhausted. This was true despite fairly good early warning information (as in Mali). Preplanning and contingency planning would have improved preparedness, reduced the response time, and improved the impact of the programs carried out to deal with the massive food shortages that faced the rural populations in Sudan, Mali, and Chad in 1984-1985.

Key information was lacking in all three countries, particularly reliable data on the population in disaster areas and on food production and stocks, including the availability and use of famine food. Better preplanning and more timely and adequate responses would have been possible in these countries had the stages of drought been better understood and more carefully monitored.

Going into 1984, the Sudanese Government had done little or no preplanning. This meant that as the magnitude of the famine became evident with the failure of the 1984 crop, there was very little preparedness. The exception was in planning for urban areas: at the Government's request in 1983, USA.I.D./Khartoum had increased the size of the Title I/III program providing wheat for sale in urban areas. The USAID Mission had planned well for the U.S. emergency food assistance program in 1984-1985, but little was done in contingency planning.

In Mali, preparedness and planning for widespread rural food shortages were insufficient despite early warnings because (1) information was deficient on the extent and character of these food shortages in rural areas and (2) systems for dealing with emergency food distributions in rural areas (in contrast to those for urban areas) were underdeveloped and unable to cope with the large-scale distributions required for isolated rural communities in the disaster zones. The limited grain supplies available through National Food Security Stocks were geared primarily to urban security.

Chad had almost no early warning or emergency preparedness planning capability. When the rains failed in 1984, donors followed their customary practice (given the lack of an early warning system and preplanning) of waiting until the 1984 harvest data were actually in hand before acting. More timely action would have been possible had donors and the Government of Chad recognized the validity of stages-of-drought analysis.

Characteristics of each stage and specific distribution modes were identified in the Chad report (see Table 2).

Specific Recommendations{1}

-- Preplanning and preparedness should be seen as a way for African governments to anticipate and deal more easily with impending food emergencies and famines before they escalate to crisis situations.

-- Preplanning should begin early by concerned governments, working with USAID Missions and other donor assistance; it should cover such matters as the following:

Table 2. Stages of the 1981-1985 Famine and Its Effects in Chad

Stage	Characteristics{a}	Remedies
1	Food will not last until next harvest; married men leave for urban jobs to get food; women sell goods, services, jewelry, household effects	In situ food for work
	Pastoralists take herds farther afield; milk production drops	Wells and boreholes for pastoralists
2	Malnourishment begins, especially among the poor and pastoralists; people sell goods, services, last of possessions	In situ feeding Food for work
	Pastoralists move family and dwindling herds south or abroad	Resettle pastoralists in better areas
3	Better off remain in villages; urban areas flooded by severely malnourished, displaced persons, beggars; camps spring up	Resettlement schemes Food for work Targeted feeding for worse off
4	Advanced aggravated malnourishment; camps with more disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; those who can, leave towns for famine foods in rural areas	Resettlement Food for work Feeding centers General Distribution Seeds, tools, etc.
5	Rains return; better off have means to cultivate and reestablish herds; many stuck in camps and urban areas; poor are destitute, unable to begin again without help	Targeted feeding Food for work Seeds, tools, etc. Resettlement or transport home

{a} Although these stages appear to be linked with the years of the famine, in fact they are tied to the amount of rainfall, the ecology of each area, the social constitution and condition of the populations,

and similar factors.

- Identifying potential at-risk groups
- Ascertaining the kinds of food that might need to be provided in a drought situation
- Obtaining baseline data
- Assessing logistic capabilities
- Identifying food distribution modes and channels
- Establishing an early warning system and predisaster planning nucleus group
- Setting up criteria for declaring an emergency

-- Given the limited resources available, A.I.D./Washington should select 10 "most vulnerable"{2} countries in terms of people and funding, for special preplanning and famine early warning system emphasis.

-- A.I.D./Washington should work with USAID Missions immediately to document stages-of-drought responses in Sub-Saharan countries and to develop systems for gathering such information as part of each country's early warning mechanism.

-- A.I.D./Washington should assist USAID Missions in preparing internal guidelines for deciding when a food emergency exists.

-- For the Sub-Saharan countries considered most vulnerable, A.I.D./Washington should ask USAID Missions to do the following:

- Document with the government the state of preplanning
- Establish, in concert with others, the elements of the preplan
- Develop a specific preliminary action plan for dealing with a food emergency that includes early warning data, needs assessment, logistics, funding, management, government and donor coordination, and distribution modes and channels

-- USAID Missions should support work by host governments to localize (i.e., to base on local assessments and data collection) the early warning data network in each country. Given limited resources, the focus of early warning efforts should be on known at-risk groups and drought-prone areas in each country.

-- A.I.D./Washington should pre-establish special procedures and administrative channels for carrying out the food emergency action plans of USAID Missions.

-- A.I.D./Washington, in particular the Africa Bureau, with

the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance (FVA), should preplan for the eventuality of another big multicountry and multiyear drought in Sub-Saharan Africa,including standby arrangements for fast-track decision-making and mobilization of resources. This contingency plan should have appropriate interagency and National Security Council clearance, and should be reviewed and monitored by key Congresspersons.

-- In at-risk countries in which A.I.D. is not engaged in a bilateral aid program (such as in Ethiopia), the Africa Bureau in cooperation with OFDA and FVA should prepare contingency plans for emergency food assistance programs; arrangements for early warning should be made with the host governments, international organizations, and PVOs.

-- A.I.D./Washington should require USAID Missions in the most at-risk countries to include in their Country Development Strategy Statement a section on drought planning. This section should show the relationship of planned development assistance to at-risk groups and droughtprone areas, relate existing drought-response preplans and action plans to the development strategy, and show how emergency food assistance will be used developmentally if it is needed.

-- USAID Missions should consider and take advantage of developmental uses of food that can be expanded to help meet food needs in times of emergency food shortages.

{1} See Section 2.2.3 on needs assessments for specific recommendations concerning the collection and analysis of key information.

{2} In 1984-1985, out of 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that received U.S. emergency food assistance, 10 accounted for 80 percent of U.S. food shipments: Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, and Sudan.

2.2.2 Donor Coordination

Lessons Learned

-- Donor coordination is critical in ensuring a more rapid and concerted response to food emergencies. Coordination involves the donor community consulting together and with the host government; both aspects are desirable and usually necessary for effective decision-making and implementation.

-- A way to strengthen donor collaboration in food emergencies and ensure positive linkages between food emergency programs and development activities is to encourage donor cooperation in food strategy formulation, food and agricultural development, and in regular food aid programs.

-- Donor coordination works best when the host government takes the lead in the coordination, albeit with substantial help, as needed, from international organizations and donors.

Discussion

Chad and Mali had strong donor coordination mechanisms; Sudan's was the weakest. In Mali and Chad, major donors and international organizations met regularly with each other and with the host governments to share information and cooperate in firming up analysis and assessments of need. This coordination and general sharing increased credibility in their home capitals and helped produce a more rapid and concerted response. In Chad and Mali, the governments chaired the donor coordination committees. Mali's committee operated at the central government level but did not function at the regional and district levels. With the United States furnishing 67 percent of all emergency food assistance in Sudan, perhaps the limited donor coordination under a U.N. coordinating committee appeared sufficient. However, the strong USAID Mission lead in implementing the program caused some tensions with the Government of Sudan.

Chad's food action coordinating committees were particularly effective and could serve as a model for some countries. Despite the limited administrative capacity of the Government, through its Ministry for Control of Natural Disasters it involved donors, PVOs, and international organizations directly -- not only at the central, but also at the prefecture (state) and subprefecture (county) levels. This cooperation worked well, both in the capital and in the field, and included assessment of need, targeting, distribution, monitoring, and evaluation.

Linkage between donor countries on regular development programs laid the groundwork for effective donor coordination in Mali and Chad during emergencies. This was not the case in Sudan.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions in chronically food-deficit countries should work as closely as possible with the host government and other donors to accomplish the following:

  - Develop a national food strategy and integrated food and agricultural development programs

  - Prepare joint plans for emergency food assistance in light of the existing national food strategy and ongoing food and agricultural programs

-- USAID Missions should coordinate U.S. support for improved and "localized" early warning systems with that of other donors to avoid duplication of effort and strengthen host government capabilities.

-- Major donors should participate in the needs assessment from the outset to ensure more complete understanding of the situation, to increase credibility, and to obtain

more rapid agreement on the magnitude of the problem.

-- A.I.D./Washington should issue guidance to USAID Missions to give priority to donor coordination by the host government even when central government administrative capability is weak. Support from USAID Missions, other donors, and the U.N. should be provided to assist the government in fulfilling this role. If this is not feasible, an international agency (e.g., the World Food Program [WFP]) is the second choice.

-- Joint emergency food committees chaired by the government should do the following:

  - Have full participation by government, donor, international agency, PVOs, and the private sector

  - Go beyond the national to the regional and district levels

-- On the U.S. side, A.I.D./Washington (rather than USAID Missions) should assume primary responsibility for coordination among capitals of donors, particularly as it concerns level of support. USAID Missions can help ensure coordination at the country level to avoid duplication, encourage sharing of tasks, and establish priorities, but they are not well placed to obtain larger contributions from other donors.

2.2.3 Needs Assessment

Lessons Learned

-- Needs assessment is a critical element of planning for emergency food assistance programs. Planning without an accurate assessment of need tends to result in poor design and inadequate responses.

-- The quality of needs assessment is usually constrained by the lack of reliable and unambiguous data on the drought and the food situation in particular disaster areas.

  - In such situations, decisions to declare a food emergency and undertake a needs assessment and a food emergency assistance effort are usually better when made early.

  - Needs assessment can be greatly improved by improving the quality of available data through preplanning, development of benchmark data, and on-site surveys of the food and agricultural situation in disaster zones.

-- Traditional coping mechanisms, including the use of famine foods and African traditions of sharing, need to be accounted for in needs assessment, program design, and implementation.

-- Inadequate assessment of in-country logistics and logistical capabilities is a common weakness, as demonstrated by the Mali and Sudan experience; it indicates the need to give increased priority to logistics of food delivery and distribution, including

the early use of qualified and experienced personnel to assist in such assessments.

Discussion

In the three countries surveyed, needs assessments relied heavily on countrywide food balance sheet analysis, usually without the benefit of local knowledge and understanding of the needs and circumstances of the local population or of local food production and stocks. In general, estimation of food requirements proved not to be a difficult problem for urban areas and a very difficult one for rural areas.

As a result, needs assessments were generally off target in all three countries. Lack of baseline data and of reliable information on the food situation and drought in particular disaster areas prevented accurate assessments of needs for rural areas. Local surveys of the situation during the needs assessments phase of planning are required. In Chad, nutritional and medical surveillance proved effective in identifying target groups and defining needs in rural areas.

In Sudan, the assessment of the at-risk population in the rural areas went from 1 million in early 1984 to 6.5 million in early 1985. Lack of data on population in the rural areas made assessments difficult. A lesson learned was that a needs assessment was required as early as possible.

The very late arrival of emergency deliveries of food for Western Sudan raised the question why more of the at-risk population did not perish. The evaluation concluded, on the basis of limited information, that the most plausible answer lay in the effectiveness of traditional coping mechanisms, which are imperfectly understood (A.I.D. 1986).

In Mali, the system for assessing national, regional, district, and local emergency food requirements proved completely inadequate. Not all drought areas were identified. The assessment used by the Government and donors in Mali for rural areas missed the mark by at least 100 percent. Demographic data as well as data on rural food stocks and district food production were weak, unreliable, or nonexistent. No attempt was made to verify assessments using local surveys of food requirements in the various districts and arrondissements of the drought zone.

In Chad, the needs assessment came very late. Although the Government had asked for help from the international community twice (on September 7 and 24, 1984), this was prior to a full needs assessment. The FAO/WFP needs assessment team did not arrive until October 1984, and its preliminary findings were not available until November 1984. The U.S. Ambassador's declaration of emergency was made on November 4, 1984. This meant that there was not sufficient time to bring in more than 50 percent of the estimated needs of the at-risk population from November 1984

through March 1985.

The logistics assessment in Mali failed to identify key problems in time, resulting in delays in and increased costs of deliveries to vulnerable groups. In Sudan the logistics assessment failed to gauge correctly the transportation difficulties of in-country distribution of food.

In the Sahelian countries, and in other African countries facing chronic food deficits, the lack of reliable forecasts and data on grain production and pasturage for drought-prone regions as well as the entire country has been a problem for 25 years. It has become a problem that can be remedied cost effectively by a combination of high technology (e.g., remote sensing and agro-meteorological forecasting) and classic on-the-ground estimates of acreage cultivated and yields. Improvement of such data will support better needs assessment as well as better development planning and programming.

Specific Recommendations

-- A.I.D./Washington should work to improve host Governments' and USAID Missions' capabilities to carry out needs assessments.

-- A.I.D. should continue its efforts to improve productivity and cost-effectiveness of global early warning systems and to link the information from these systems to localized early warning data.

-- In the most vulnerable countries, USAID Missions should seek to assist host governments in strengthening or creating systems for providing information necessary to assess needs and for carrying out the needs assessment.

-- Decision-makers should be given support and authority ahead of time to switch gears from development to emergency status when deciding whether a food emergency exists and whether to begin the needs assessment process.

  - They should be encouraged to shorten their decision time, foregoing information to gain essential time when necessary.

  - Specific data points, such as rain failure and migratory movements, should be directly related to USAID Mission guidelines for deciding when a food emergency exists.

-- Simultaneously with the needs assessment, a detailed analysis of the country's logistical capacity should be identified.

-- A.I.D. should encourage and help finance on-site needs assessments of disaster areas, with local participation.

  - These would assess the food and agriculture situation in particular districts, through the use of national and regional specialists as well as district and

local officials.

- In drought-prone areas, the practice of reporting on the food and agricultural situation can be institutionalized on an annual basis and used to assess the development situation as well as relief and emergency food needs.

-- A.I.D. should recognize concerns within the Agency on the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of collecting food and agricultural data in Sub-Saharan countries for development purposes and for emergency food assistance planning.

- Notwithstanding such concerns, the time is long overdue in the most at-risk countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to get the basic data on food and agricultural production right, at least in countries in which the governments and other donors will cooperate to develop reliable data on grain acreages and production and on pasture conditions and extent.

- A.I.D. should continue efforts to establish the technology of an approach which cost effectively marries high-technology remote-sensing data collection with locally managed on-the-ground estimates of acreages cultivated, yields, and production.

- In addition, A.I.D./Washington should charge USAID Missions in the countries most at risk to work with the host governments and other donors to find cost-efective ways of achieving reliable data over the next 5 to 10 years.

-- A.I.D. should support host government decentralization of emergency food assistance and drought planning, including needs assessment, in the most at-risk countries.

- In these countries, A.I.D. should urge and help host governments to institute a standard practice of periodic surveys of drought-prone areas by administrative districts to provide for at least an annual scrutiny of relief and emergency food needs of their rural communities as well as the evolving development situation.

- Such surveys should involve the participation of regional, district, and local authorities as well as representatives of central government.

-- Rapid nutritional and medical surveillance techniques should be used in potential food emergency situations to help assess the nature and magnitude of the emergency and the location of affected groups.

-- A.I.D./Washington should commission a series of studies immediately on traditional coping mechanisms to better understand them and to determine their influence on the impact of emergency food assistance programs. A.I.D./

Washington should charge USAID Missions with accounting for the role of coping mechanisms in their preliminary action plans; this accounting should indicate how these mechanisms will diminish needed emergency food assistance and how emergency programs can be designed to not undermine them. Country governments should consider how policies on grain marketing, food production, and food aid interface with traditional mechanisms and how

the latter can be supported.

-- USAID Missions should encourage country governments to document famine food knowledge in a form that can readily be disseminated to rural households in the event of other food emergencies.

2.2.4 Project Design

Lessons Learned

-- Emergency food assistance efforts are time sensitive and require a time-phased action plan.

-- Clear objectives established during the needs assessment phase provide the means for focusing, guiding, monitoring, and evaluating emergency food aid programs; clearly defined purposes and objectives foster more timely and better coordinated donor support.

-- For low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, programming for food shortages for rural areas, which normally or traditionally are self-sufficient or self-reliant, is a much more difficult problem than programming for urban areas.

  - Programming for urban supply poses fewer difficulties because systems for planning and managing urban supplies are usually well established.

  - Part of the problem in rural areas is the difficulty of assessing the needs and targeting at-risk groups correctly.

  - Most important is the lack of established mechanisms or systems for delivering large-scale supplies of food to rural areas, where transportation facilities are limited and marketing and distribution systems are undeveloped or nonexistent.

-- Various distribution modes and channels have been found effective for targeting and managing rural distributions to needy persons.

-- In major crises involving famine situations affecting large numbers of persons over widespread rural areas, the main recourse will need to be general distribution programs;{3} the following factors must be considered in such programs:

- Impact and cost-effectiveness are increased when food is distributed and pre-positioned before the rainy season (when difficulties and costs of food distribution soar).

- In the most vulnerable low-income countries, supplemental feeding and health care should be programmed to accompany general feeding programs.

- General distributions will work best when care is taken to target carefully, to provide ample management and monitoring of distributions, and to ensure local transport for them.

- General feeding programs for rural areas can be effectively targeted and well managed, particularly if transport and monitoring capacity is mobilized.

-- In many situations, including major crises, distribution modes and channels other than general distribution should be included in the program design, either as options or as supplements. These will depend on pre-planning, the country situation, and the character and magnitude of the emergency and will include food for work, resettlement programs, and monetization. Programs such as food for work, child feeding, and resettlement have the advantage of being beneficiary-specific and development-oriented.

-- The assistance of PVOs in partnership with host governments and donors has proven particularly useful in helping these governments address emergency needs in rural areas. PVOs can play a dual role of assisting in emergency relief and supporting local development. The private sector can also play key roles, particularly in transportation.

-- A key element of program design is targeting. Targeting specific households comes closest to ensuring that those who need food actually receive it. Health/nutritional criteria, which depend on identifying diminished health or nutritional status, can be used to target areas, specific individuals, or groups to receive emergency food.

-- Where data for needs assessment are weak and the at-risk population constitutes a moving base (as was the case in Sudan), programmers can resort to early incremental programming, permitting adjustments in the design of the program as the nature and magnitude of the emergency becomes clearer.

-- For low-income countries, an integrated package of food, financial support, material support, and technical assistance, generally involving several donors, is usually required to respond adequately to widespread emergency food shortages.

Discussion

Emergency food assistance efforts are time sensitive, as was shown clearly in Sudan, Mali, and Chad in 1984-1985. For example, all three countries had one critical program and management issue in common -- the need to get food for needy people into rural areas before the beginning of the rainy season.

This was not achieved adequately in any of the three countries. Emergency food assistance efforts require a time-phased action plan, adhered to not only in Washington and by USAID Missions but also by the host government, other donors, international organizations, and other players. Such plans were not developed in 1984-1985, a period in which lack of timely responses was a central factor in undermining program impact and detracting from the major effort undertaken.

To accelerate responses before needs assessments could be carried out, A.I.D. resorted in Mali and in Sudan to an incremental approach to programming. In response to requests by the USAID Missions, A.I.D. authorized early in the fall of 1984 initial allocations of emergency food. These initial allocations provided food earlier than would otherwise have been possible but did not solve the problem of late deliveries.

A.I.D.'s normal project and program planning requires the careful definition of purpose, goal, inputs, and outputs in the "logical framework." A.I.D. does not use the logical framework as a guide in the design of emergency food aid programs. As a consequence, no single document is usually available to provide an analysis of the goal(s) and objectives of the program, how the problem is perceived and assessed, what strategy is proposed to address the problem, and how inputs and outputs relate to purpose and goal. Nor does the documentation on the program establish verifiable objective indicators to be used to assess results and performance. This was the situation observed in Sudan, Mali, and Chad, suggesting strongly the need to establish, during the needs assessment phase, clearly defined objectives and purposes and estimates of required inputs and outputs.

General feeding programs for rural areas were required in all three countries. Experience with general feeding varied from country to country. In Sudan much of the distribution was general; the PVOs worked with the provincial and local governments to identify the most needy counties and villages. Capacity to monitor was limited. In Mali, the system proved very effective once food became available. In Chad, general distribution was for the most part targeted only to the county (canton) level, without adequate records of how the food was finally distributed. More monitors could have been used.

In Sudan, the USAID Mission's strategy for implementing general feeding programs in rural areas was to use the private sector and PVOs (emphasizing the role of provincial/local government). This strategy was effective and would have worked even more efficiently and cost effectively had sufficient emergency food arrived before the rainy season. A weak point in the program was the tardy development of supplemental feeding activities. Supplemental feeding did not start until the fall of 1985 because of delays in requests and in shipment. It would have been much more effective had it been requested and started up at the same time as the general feeding.

In Mali, considerable success was achieved in designing an effective system to target and manage large-scale distribution of food to drought victims in rural areas. For these areas, the program design called for PVOs to manage distributions of donor-donated grain from the Government's grain marketing board (OPAM) warehouses to rural recipients in accordance with pre-established specific distribution plans. The program was simple in design and effective in execution. The system of collaborating with PVOs to manage emergency distributions in isolated rural areas is a model with potential wide applicability. It was instrumental in distributing substantial rations to an estimated 2 million Malians at risk in hard to reach rural areas. Several weak points in the design grew out of an underassessment of the problem. For example, not enough food was provided early enough. In addition, much of the distribution was programmed during the rainy season when transportation in rural areas is most difficult and costly. The program also did not provide for sufficient supplemental feeding and health care for vulnerable groups or for transitional assistance for rehabilitation and recovery. The evaluation in Mali also suggested that the program could have had more impact through increased participation of local organizations and structures in program planning and implementation.

In Chad, the central problem paralleled that of Sudan and Mali: how to get food out to needy people in isolated rural areas. PVOs and international organizations were of major importance in Chad in helping the Government of Chad manage distribution programs, with the WFP taking a strong leading position. Program design included general distribution by WFP/United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) and PVOs, and development-oriented distributions via food for work and resettlement. As noted above, although the Chadian Government's operational capacity to deliver food was extremely limited, the Government played an important role in targeting the needy and establishing priorities through its food action committees and mobile assessment teams, which used PVOs, donors, and international organizations operating at the prefecture (regional) and subprefecture (district) levels. This successful approach merits consideration in the design of programs in other countries with limited administrative capacity. The Chad evaluation also brought out that more extensive use of food for work in the earlier years of the drought would have provided a basis for more rapid expansion of targeted emergency assistance after the 1984 harvest failure. The same can be said of Mali and Sudan.

In the three countries, it was found that components for a successful emergency food assessment program include not only accurate needs assessment and food, but also technical assistance, material aid (e.g. trucks), and financial support. Under the supplemental appropriation for the African Hunger Relief Initiative, nonfood supporting aid was provided by A.I.D.'s Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to Sudan, Mali, and Chad. In Mali, for example, $3.9 million was used to fund a CARE emergency food transport grant, a Department of Defense airlift and operation of a 60-ton ferry at Gao, cholera supplies, and a food monitor. Title II local currency sales proceeds were an important source of funding for in-country transportation and distribution costs. In Mali, proceeds from

1983-1984 Title II sales were augmented by a local currency loan from regular food aid local currency generations and later by the proceeds of 1984-1985 Title II sales (20,000 MT). The early availability of Title II local currencies and nonfood aid support from OFDA was important in initiating early action in all three countries.

A food emergency usually requires a surge in logistical activities. It is during this period of pressure on the logistical system that its weaknesses appear most prominently, causing program needs to go unmet. In planning and programming, logistical capabilities need to be assessed realistically as required by the emergency. For example, if private sector trucking is to be used, freight rates will increase, as happened in Sudan, unless there is important surplus capacity in the transport sector.

There are potential development aspects of infrastructure improvement that program design should take into account. For example, a new bridge, such as the one built in Chad, can be a national asset for further development. Private sector involvement in logistics may strengthen the program and can also improve private sector capacity for later development activities.

Some logistic improvements -- such as rehabilitation of rural roads -- can be developmental and, via food for work, can use the very food aid the road improvement is intended to facilitate. (Development aspects are discussed further in Section 2.2.10.)

Specific Recommendations

- -- In cases of emergency food needs, USAID Missions should work with the host government, the United Nations, major donors, PVOs, and the private sector to develop timely, integrated, time-phased plans with firm schedules for delivery of materials, equipment, manpower, and food needed to mitigate the effects of the emergency.

- -- A.I.D./Washington and USAID Missions should work to ensure more clearly defined statements of project goals, purposes, inputs, and outputs.

- -- When general feeding through free distribution in rural areas is required to respond to emergency food shortages, A.I.D./Washington should require the advance preparation of a specific distribution plan identifying the target population (e.g., communities, families, sedentary population, migrants), criteria for targeting at-risk groups, the proposed ration, and the system of monitoring and evaluation. The preparation of the plan should as a rule involve regional, district, and local authorities.

- -- USAID Missions should program food assistance deliveries for rural areas for distribution and pre-positioning before the advent of the rainy season. Pre-positioning should be based on specific distribution plans, including contingency plans for the use of the food.

-- USAID Missions should as a rule plan, in concert with the host government and other donors, supplemental feeding and health care for vulnerable groups as an

integral component of emergency food assistance programs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

-- USAID Missions should build on food for work or other development-oriented food programs (school feeding, resettlement) to help meet emergency food needs.

-- USAID Missions should include the following in project design:

- Plans for recovery and rehabilitation of drought victims

- Provision for management resources (food monitors, collaboration with local and expatriate PVOS and local and district indigenous management resources)

- Consideration of drought stages and additional monitoring required to assess the food situation and requirements for recovery of drought victims in the countryside

- Effective targeting of at-risk populations (Socioeconomic criteria can be used when household income collapses have not yet led to major health or nutritional status declines, or to complement health/ nutrition criteria.)

- Plans for in situ feeding in rural areas and other support for early recovery of crop production

- Provisions for end-use checking, monitoring, and evaluation

-- Based on early assessment of logistical requirements and capabilities, USAID Missions should prepare a logistics plan for in-country distribution, with particular attention to the hard-to-reach rural areas and opportunities to use and strengthen the private sector.

{3} General distribution programs in rural areas surveyed worked on the basis of free distributions of a cereal -- such as sorghum, corn, or corn meal -- to families according to a predetermined ration.

2.2.5 Distribution Mechanisms (Modes and Channels)

Lessons Learned

-- The impact of various distribution modes used in Sudan, Mali, and Chad in achieving the objectives of emergency food assistance programs differed primarily as a function of how well they were designed and managed.

-- A combination of distribution modes is usually necessary to achieve desired program impact. In particular, general free distribution for rural areas and supplemental feeding of vulnerable groups belong together.

-- Linkages between emergency food assistance and development are much better served by some modes (e.g., monetization, food for work, resettlement) than by others (e.g., free general distribution).

-- Triangular transactions, involving Title II barter in a food surplus country for emergency food, provide opportunities to promote regional trade, reduce port congestion, and accelerate food deliveries, but require experienced management to organize.

-- Monetization was found to be a useful and efficient means of generating financial support for emergency food programs and observed to work better where the agencies used (such as National Cereal Offices and marketing boards) have benefited from technical assistance and where use is made of private marketing channels.

-- Multiyear monetization programs involving major food donors, as in Mali, can provide resources and policy leverage for addressing structural problems of food and agriculture development -- so as to make future emergency assistance unnecessary -- as well as resources to help country governments preplan and manage food emergencies.

-- Distribution channels (e.g., WFP, PVOs, host government) are central to program impact.

  - PVOs and international agencies can be effective in developing distribution mechanisms and managing distribution channels for emergency food supply for rural areas.

  - PVOs prove more effective when their interface with local and district governments is more structured.

  - Established systems for urban food supply, which use private grain marketing entities, are effective channels for emergency assistance to urban dwellers and rural migrants.

  - When the internal distribution system is weak, it can be improved by establishing regional logistical bases for storage of food and fuel as well as truck repair facilities.

Discussion

The three countries used a variety of channels (e.g. PVOs, international organizations, private sector, government) for distribution, and several modes of activity (e.g., general feeding, food for work, child feeding centers, wadi resettlement, monetization, triangular trade) to reach the rural areas and

assist those at risk. All countries found PVOs and international organizations essential for carrying out major distribution programs (CARE, Save the Children, WFP, League of International Red Cross Societies [LICROSS], Medecins sans Frontieres [MSF], and UNICEF to name a few).

General feeding was the main distribution mode in Sudan and Mali, but in Chad more food reached beneficiaries more regularly via food for work, special feeding, and resettlement than via general distribution. Under field conditions, programs that target specific households (including general distribution) appeared to have most impact.

The private sector proved to be an important resource in the organization and management of food shipments and distribution. In general, Sudan used private sector contractors effectively in getting food out to rural areas and repairing infrastructure essential to deliveries. However, despite its good overall record, the major private contractor was roundly criticized by some PVOs because it did not distribute food to some of the harder to reach isolated areas, which were in great need, until after the rainy season. This was possible because the contract prepared by the Government of Sudan was loosely drawn. Mali's experience in contracting with a private transporter to supply Region VI demonstrates the need to contract early and to include safeguards in such contracts. PVOs involved in the program in Mali made good use of the private sector; for example, the World Vision Relief Organization used a private firm to organize and manage the delivery of corn (under the Title II barter arrangement)from Ghana into Regions II and VII.

In evaluating modes of distribution used in rural areas, it was generally easier to track the use of food when the assistance was targeted (e.g., food-for-work and child feeding programs or specific distribution plans, as in Mali). More food reached the recipients on a regular basis under targeted distribution than under general distribution; more monitoring and better local transport would have improved the latter mode.

Food distribution systems for urban areas were well established and worked well in the three countries. Monetization worked well in Sudan (Title I/III), Mali (Section 206), and Chad (Title II emergency food) where food was sold in the urban areas through commercial marketing channels, and the local funds generated were used to support their respective emergency food assistance programs. However, sales of Title II emergency food in market towns in the Sudan did not work well because of organization and preparation problems.

Multiyear food sales programs, such as the Mali program that has been operating for several years and the proposed Chad Section 206 program, which is under consideration by Washington, are useful in providing the local currency needed to support the use of food for development-related activities, as well as necessary policy changes.

The triangular trade program carried out for Mali and involving the barter of Title II rice for Ghanaian corn for Regions II and VII in Mali encountered administrative delays but demonstrated the feasibility of such operations in the future.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions working with host governments and other donors on the kinds of distribution mechanism to be used should emphasize modes that target potential beneficiaries carefully, given the circumstances involved.

-- Given their past record of usefulness and know-how, PVOs should be involved early and their participation requested in developing and carrying out emergency food assistance programs. Host governments and USAID Missions should support development of local PVOs which can mobilize indigenous private resources for disaster relief and for development.

-- In situations in which needs assessments establish the requirement for a general feeding program, USAID Missions should insist that an approved, specific time-phased plan of food distribution be prepared in advance.

-- USAID Missions should consider monetization of a portion of the emergency food assistance, either through PL 480 emergency Title II sales or Title II Section 206 programs.

  - In addition to use of Title II sales proceeds to support costs of emergency food program distributions, proceeds should also be available to

    support preplanning (including necessary studies) and needs assessments (including on-site surveys).

  - In countries where there are Title I/III programs, governments should be asked to allocate some of these funds to support emergency food preplanning and programming as well as the programs themselves.

2.2.6 Management

This section is divided into six subsections covering lessons learned, USAID Mission management, AID/Washington management, country government management, the role of PVOs, and the use of the private sector.

Lessons Learned

-- Considering the huge volume of U.S. resources involved in emergency food assistance programs, USAID Mission are generally under-resourced in their staffing, in terms of both person-years and experience.

-- The A.I.D./Washington-USAID Mission decision-making track, even as altered to meet the needs of the African food emergencies of 1984-1985, is too slow and inflexible for the desired impact.

-- Central and local government management capability is critical for effective program planning and management. The ability of country governments to manage emergency food programs is itself a real measure of development.

-- PVOs and international organizations can play a vital role in assisting the country government in organizing and managing emergency food assistance programs and in moving to a development phase.

USAID Management

Discussion

Emergency food assistance was a large and valuable resource ($2.0 billion in food and supporting nonfood assistance for Africa alone in FYs 1984 and 1985), and food assistance programs were carried out under severe time pressures. Food emergencies, because they tend to be chaotic, fast-moving problems, are highly amenable to good management practices that impose discipline and a strong sense of timing and resource organization and control.

In this context, USAID Missions were generally underresourced in their staffing in terms of person-years and experience in emergency food assistance programs. For example, in Sudan in 1984 only two middle-grade officers were assigned fulltime to manage the emergency food assistance program during the first year, although it grew to the size of $250 million during that period. In Mali, only a fraction of the USAID Mission staff was assigned full-time to the drought emergency, although emergency assistance in 1984-1985 was triple the size of the development assistance program. U.S. assistance in Mali was decisive in helping the Government of Mali organize an effective system for rural distribution in collaboration with PVOs. However, lack of management resources among the USAID Mission, other donors, and the Government contributed to a gross underassessment of rural food shortages and failure to anticipate logistical problems. In Chad, the fortuitous emergency food program experience of USAID staff contributed to a well-organized program.

In its other program efforts, A.I.D. is meticulous about matching experienced personnel with the task or job to be carried out. However, it does sometimes understaff programs, which is not always obvious in development projects. Such understaffing or lack of experience can become glaringly apparent in food emergencies. In Sudan, for example, it led to lack of supplemental feeding when needed most, inadequate monitoring, and little contingency planning. In Mali, timing of food arrivals was scheduled without sufficient regard to the rainy season, which caused serious difficulties in distribution to rural areas.

Lack of sufficient and experienced personnel was a factor in all three countries in the failure to prepare time-phased action plans and to correctly assess logistic capabilities and requirements (see Section 2.2.4 on project design).

Specific Recommendations

-- A.I.D./Washington, given the limited resources available, should select 10 countries (e.g., those that together received over 80 percent of food assistance in FY 1985 -- Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Somalia, and Sudan) for special preplanning and early warning system emphasis, in terms of both people and funds.

-- A.I.D./Washington should establish a computerized roster of Agency personnel, retrievable by discipline or technical skill, who have had previous experience in managing emergency food and nonfood assistance programs. This would provide A.I.D. with the information needed to take full advantage of personnel within the Agency with valuable past experience in countries and at headquarters in this kind of work.

-- A.I.D./Washington should establish special procedures to permit transfer and use of these personnel as needed in a flexible and easy-to-use system. For example, not all USAID Missions have contract officers or resident legal staff, nor do they have sociologists, nutritionists, or logistics specialists. Safeguards should be built in to avoid prejudice to personnel in their annual performance evaluations when they are transferred for relatively long temporary duties (3 to 9 months).

-- A roster of contractors and consulting firms with special competence in emergency assistance programs should be established and kept up-to-date by A.I.D./Washington. This should shorten the time required to locate qualified firms or individual skills outside the Agency.

-- A.I.D./Washington should include a personnel section on food emergency technical expertise and management in its indefinite quantity contracts with the Department of Agriculture to provide access to talent outside the agency.

-- A.I.D./Washington should support USAID Missions when it is necessary for them to use "special procedures" to attain emergency program objectives. Contracting, for example, may need to be accelerated if desired program results are to be realized.

Washington Management

Discussion

The evaluations of Sudan, Mali, and Chad food emergency programs showed that the A.I.D./Washington-USAID Mission decision-making track, even as altered to better meet the needs of the major food emergencies in Africa in 1984-1985, was too slow and inflexible to deal effectively with the extended emergency situations being faced. The food emergency situations

were often volatile in their demands on A.I.D. and other donors. A.I.D.'s normal administrative mechanisms did not always provide the quick and flexible responses needed where information flows were erratic and major crises would arise with little advance warning.

A.I.D./Washington and PVO headquarter delays in reaching agreement over a contract led to the delayed arrival of badly needed monitors and the need to air freight trucks to Chad. Similarly, the time required to conclude a grant agreement with CARE for emergency food transport and distribution in Mali delayed urgently needed operations there. In Sudan, delays in funding and shipment of supplemental foods caused the food to arrive after the rainy season had begun, which caused further delays in moving food out to at-risk populations.

Specific Recommendations

-- A fast decision track headed by a full-charge decision-maker in Washington should be preplanned in support of emergency food assistance activities. It should be developed with White House and Congressional participation. This fast-track approach should be designed to shorten the time of Washington's responses to USAID Missions; it should, however, carry out its work with full cognizance of the development context of food assistance efforts.

-- A.I.D./Washington should pre-establish special procedures and administrative channels for carrying out the food emergency action plans of USAID Missions; in particular, the Africa Bureau, with OFDA and FVA, should preplan for the eventuality of another big multicountry and multiyear drought in Sub-Saharan Africa, including standby arrangements for fast-track decision-making and mobilization of resources. The cost-effectiveness objective is clear -- faster action so that use of airlifts and helicopters will be unnecessary.

-- A.I.D./Washington, as part of the measures to reduce administrative delays, should consider increased delegation of authority to USAID Missions once there is an emergency. For example, an allocation of $3 to $5 million to a USAID Mission to be used to accelerate the response to the emergency would enable early action. Such an allocation should be complemented by temporary duty assignment of personnel with the necessary contracting and legal expertise.

-- The Africa Bureau and A.I.D./Washington should prepare and issue a new operational manual and guidance for USAID Missions to include the following:

  - Guidelines for preplanning, early warning systems, program identification and design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

  - Guidelines for strengthening host government capability to manage drought disaster and food emergency situations, particularly in the rural areas

- Guidelines for cooperation/coordination with other donors

- Guidelines for linking drought planning and emergency food assistance programs to development

- Guidelines for participation/involvement of the private sector and PVOs in emergency food assistance programs

- Guidelines on use of leverage from emergency food assistance programs for policy dialogue with host governments

-- A.I.D./Washington should provide food emergency briefings and training to those likely to be in leadership positions during food emergencies (e.g., Mission Directors). This should include briefings at Mission Directors meetings and special sessions in A.I.D.'s normal training programs (e.g., the Senior Seminar).

-- A.I.D./Washington should develop a computerized simulation training program (e.g., an interactive emergency food assistance program "game" for a microcomputer) for use by all staff that illustrates the principles involved in food emergency management in detail, including the consequences of decisions made by the person using the training game.

-- The Africa Bureau should work with A.I.D. Regional Economic Development Services Offices (REDSO) in Africa to provide increased support to USAID Missions for planning and designing emergency food assistance programs, including support for logistical needs assessment and coordination of port arrivals. FVA should explore the opportunities of using the private sector through bills of lading that provide for delivery of food to specified in-country locations, thereby freeing regional Food for Peace advisers for consultation and assistance to USAID Missions.

Host Government Management

Discussion

If the host government can coordinate the implementation of the national food emergency action plan and the local government can also be involved, program effectiveness is likely to be greater than if they are bypassed. In Chad, the Government was very effective in coordinating the emergency effort and local-level governments were actively involved. Despite its many constraints of human and financial resources, the Government was seen as a major player in determining the policy framework and allocation of food assistance. It set the policy of in situ feeding, which avoided the establishment of camps and massive migration to N'Djamena. It chaired the Food Aid Action Committee, made up of all bilateral, multilateral, and PVO donors

in Chad, and took an active role in formulating issues and resolving problems. Mechanisms were developed to monitor food delivery, to the extent possible, and to institute appropriate sanctions in cases of abuse.

The donors believed it was essential to consult with and bolster Chad's public sector. As a result, the food assistance activity was well coordinated, relationships between donors and the Government and also among donors were strengthened, and the national and regional capabilities of the Government were enhanced.

The infrastructure now exists to improve the planning and implementation of development programs and to respond more effectively to future emergencies.

Local government and village involvement in food emergencies should be encouraged. This has been actualized to different degrees in different countries -- less in Sudan than in Chad, for example. Malians were young, inexperienced, and little-involved in food emergency activities in 1984-1985. Rather, the effort was implemented mostly by Europeans, who took all their experience with them when they returned home.

Local government involvement can help with three functions: information, decisions, and leadership. Information transmission by local government can be to beneficiaries (e.g., what is happening?) or to those working on the food emergency (e.g., the "grain" price of livestock has fallen sharply). Building up the capability of local government (and nongovernmental organizations) to identify and report such information contributes to drought preparedness and emergency food assistance program implementation.

Decisions by local government dealing with food allocations, food-for-work projects, and so forth often provide an important imprimatur of authority for beneficiaries that PVOs or donors operating by themselves do not possess.

Leadership from local government officials helps in program implementation. For example, local officials can encourage persons considering migration to remain where they are or these officials can organize food-for-work efforts, such as was the case in Chad. If the emergency food assistance program can be concentrated on directly supporting development-related projects, the number of "projects" will be large. The role of local government (and other leadership) then becomes central to success because donors do not have sufficient management and technical assistance to support such extensive programs.

Central and local government involvement is especially important in chronic drought countries where institutional emergency preparedness needs to be built up to enable stronger responses to future emergencies. No matter the exact role of the host government, the creation of a strong management structure to implement food emergencies at the country level will contribute to the success of the program. The United Nations and other international organizations can make important contributions to the design and operation of this structure.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions should encourage central governments to extend their emergency food assistance coordinating committees from central down to regional and district levels, drawing on help from PVOs, international organizations, and donors.

-- USAID Missions and PVOs should encourage local government to be the principal adviser about food allocations, food-for-work projects, and other local aspects of food emergency programs.

-- USAID Missions should work extensively with local government to implement food-for-work projects and other developmental uses of food during a food emergency.

Role of PVOs in Management

Discussion

PVOs participated as important operational managers of food distribution in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. They provided personnel and helped target those in need, assisted in getting food to them, established development efforts in the middle of the emergency, and carried out food end-use checks. Thus, they were involved effectively in planning, logistics, impact measurement, development programming using food, and many other activities.

Maintaining a state of PVO readiness to handle food emergencies would provide an important reservoir of capacity in chronic food-deficit countries. Supporting PVO efforts to drought-proof vulnerable groups using food aid during nondrought periods is one way to do this while also linking development and food emergency assistance more closely during future emergencies.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions should support involvement and collaboration of PVOs and international organizations to help the host government develop emergency distribution systems and manage distribution of food to rural areas.

-- USAID Missions should encourage the host government to involve in-country PVOs as a means of obtaining more private sector and administrative support.

-- For the most at-risk countries, A.I.D./Washington should work out preset standby arrangements with one or more PVOs to ensure their rapid response when a food emergency is identified; A.I.D./Washington should assist PVOs, if necessary, to improve their management capability to respond to such identified emergencies.

Use of Private Sector

Discussion

Use of private sector entities and resources is often an excellent means of achieving emergency food assistance objectives. Transport and distribution of food by the private sector, for example, may be the only way to ensure delivery in a reasonable amount of time in some circumstances. This was true in Sudan where the use of private trucks to deliver food to PVOs and from PVOs to beneficiaries was essential to program success. Other areas where the private sector might help are accounting, reporting systems, fuel supplies, and food processing.

Constraints are involved in using the private sector. In Sudan, private sector firms took advantage of loose contract provisions to benefit themselves financially at the expense of hungry people. (Despite some difficulties, because of the looseness of the contract, in getting the private contractor to move food to isolated areas during the rainy season, the private sector still played a major role in moving the more than 1 million MT of food distributed in the Sudan in 1984-1985.) During a food emergency, market forces tend to drive up prices for some goods and services provided by the private sector, such as trucking or motor fuel. In Sudan and Mali, A.I.D. and host government procedures prevented them from accepting such price changes quickly, resulting in slower program responses.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions in the most at-risk countries should prepare, as part of their preplanning effort, an inventory of private sector resources that could be used during a food emergency. Specific means for using such resources should be included in each USAID Mission's preliminary action plan.

-- A.I.D./Washington should prepare specific model contracts for use in employing private sector resources during food emergencies, drawing on the experiences of USAID Missions during the 1984-1985 African drought.

-- A.I.D./Washington should develop special administrative procedures for procuring private sector assistance during food emergencies and predetermine the extent of the authority USAID Missions will have to procure such assistance during food emergencies.

2.2.7 Timing

Lessons Learned

-- Program designers must balance the need to generate early responses (which help ensure program impact and

cost-effectiveness) with the time required (1) to correctly identify and assess the problem in rural areas and (2) to design practical programs in concert with other donors and the government.

-- A.I.D./Washington's decision-making for food aid, which normally follows the more deliberative processes used for development projects, can be accelerated by a systems approach for responding to food emergencies; improved communication, better guidelines, and preplanning can reduce lengthy administrative review in Washington.

-- Widespread droughts, causing emergencies in many countries at the same time, may result in extended delays in establishing priorities and in mobilizing additional resources unless extraordinary measures to generate timely U.S. responses are taken.

Discussion

Substantial amounts of the food aid programmed to meet the emergency arrived late in all three countries even though it was the fourth year of the drought. Sufficient food was not available when most needed to feed the hungry in the rural areas. Arrivals after the beginning of the rainy season resulted in increased costs and further delay in delivery of food to vulnerable populations.

In Sudan, C-130s and helicopters had to be brought in to reach isolated areas. This form of transport greatly increased the cost per ration of food delivered. Trucks had to be airlifted into Chad because of administrative delays.

When the three emergencies were announced, decision-makers in the donor and international organizations still needed more solid information. Once the rains failed and the crops were ruined in the fourth year of the drought, there was an immediate need for food assistance. Use of routine and cumbersome administrative procedures resulted in delays when prompt decisions were needed to respond on a timely basis. These experiences indicate the need for a faster, more responsive decision-making track modified to meet emergency needs.

Experience in Sudan, Mali, and Chad linked the question of better timing to the need for more timely, precise, and complete information earlier. This would enable donors to act more quickly with assurance and thus reduce the time needed for decision-making.

Specific Recommendations

-- USA.I.D. Missions in preplanning or needs assessments should consider the stage of drought involved when working out plans. For example, if the country is in the second or third consecutive year of drought and the crop

again fails, food will be needed in early fall of the same year. In this case, incremental shipments should be planned, without waiting for production data or a definitive needs assessment.

-- USAID Missions, in designing emergency food assistance programs, should build into their time-phased action plans responses to time constraints caused by such things as the rainy season, port congestion due to nonfood exports, and the stage-of-drought requirements for early arrivals. If possible, some allowance for unforeseen delays should be included.

-- A.I.D./Washington should pre-establish special procedures and administrative channels for carrying out the food emergency action plans of USAID Missions.

-- As one measure to reduce administrative delays, A.I.D./ Washington should consider increased delegation of authority to USAID Missions once there is an emergency. For example, an allocation of $3 to $5 million to USAID Missions to be used to accelerate the response to the emergency would enable early action. Such an allocation should be complemented by temporary duty assignment of necessary contracting and legal assistance personnel.

2.2.8 Impact

Lessons Learned

-- Impact is greatly enhanced by early coordination and cooperation of donors and international organizations with host government during needs assessment, project design, and implementation.

-- For increased impact in Sub-Saharan countries most at risk, emergency food assistance programs need to include financial, material, and technical assistance as well as food aid.

-- Impact is largely dependent on how well the needs of at-risk populations are targeted and how effectively emergency programs are managed to address these needs.

-- When households are targeted, emergency food assistance programs may achieve significant impact without addressing the totality of needs, assuming significant rations are provided. Such food assistance at the margin provides critical support complementing traditional coping mechanisms such as community and extended family sharing and use of famine foods.

-- Impact is reduced when supplemental feeding and health care are not provided.

-- Impact is enhanced when monitoring systems effectively feed back information into the management system to identify problems during program implementation and permit management to take remedial action.

Discussion

The food delivered to rural beneficiaries in all three countries was very important and made a critical difference in keeping many of them alive and in their villages. However, not enough food was provided early enough. In Sudan and Mali, the impact of the programs was decreased significantly by the failure to provide food in time for distribution and pre-positioning in rural areas before the rainy season. In Chad, food was urgently needed beginning in November 1984, but sufficient food was not available until May/June 1985. In the three countries, lack of baseline data prevented quantitative measures of impact.

In Sudan and Mali, the slow start of supplemental feeding and lack of health inputs as companions to general feeding lessened the positive impact of the program, particularly on vulnerable groups. In both countries, in situ distributions helped many farmers regain or maintain strength to plant a crop when the rains came (starting in June 1985). In Chad, specialized food-for-work and resettlement programs generally targeted needy families better and with greater impact than did general distributions.

In Chad, vigorous efforts to bring in health inputs and have them distributed throughout the country were hampered by the lack of rural health infrastructure. Efforts to distribute health inputs were not undertaken in Sudan and only to a limited extent in Mali.

Traditional coping mechanisms, including use of famine foods and sharing within extended families and communities, were very important in helping people survive the drought. Such coping mechanisms are poorly understood by decision-makers and were not adequately considered in planning for the 1984-1985 emergencies in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. More information is needed on these mechanisms.

Specific Recommendations

The degree of impact achieved in a particular emergency food assistance program will depend on donor coordination, needs assessment, project design, management, and distribution mechanisms. Specific recommendations for improving performance were discussed earlier in this section. In addition, specific recommendations are presented concerning program content, targeting, and coping mechanisms.

-- USAID Missions in their preplanning, needs assessments, and project design should plan and provide for -- in cooperation with other donors -- financial support, material aid, and technical assistance, as well as food.

-- USAID Missions should normally plan with the host government and other donors for supplemental feeding and

health care for vulnerable groups as an integral component
of emergency food assistance programs.

-- For maximum impact, USAID Missions should target emergency
food assistance, particularly in rural areas, to reach at-risk individuals and families.

-- Emergency food supplies for rural areas should be programmed for delivery for distribution or for prepositioning before the rainy season, based on specific
distribution plans including contingency plans for the use of the food.

-- USAID Missions should, when possible, build on food-for-work or other development-oriented food programs
to help target and meet emergency food needs; they should
use monetization when beneficiaries have or can be provided with (through extended family or work) sufficient income to purchase required food.

-- A.I.D./Washington should commission a series of studies immediately on indigenous coping mechanisms in order to understand them better and to determine their influence on the impact of emergency food assistance programs.

-- A.I.D./Washington should charge USAID Missions with accounting for the role of coping mechanisms in their preliminary action plans; this accounting should indicate
how these mechanisms will diminish needed emergency food assistance and how emergency programs can be designed not to undermine them.

-- USAID Missions should encourage country governments to document famine food knowledge in a form that can readily be disseminated to rural households in the event of other food emergencies.

2.2.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

Lessons Learned

-- PVOs can effectively monitor the use of emergency food assistance in rural areas.

-- With proper guidance, USAID Mission food monitoring staff can be used to help gather the data needed for analysis of overall program impact in drought areas and for forward planning.

-- Monitoring is facilitated by advance preparation of specific distribution plans and by careful targeting of beneficiaries. In the absence of such plans and targeting there is a need to reinforce monitoring

capability.

-- Lack of baseline data contributes to unfocused or faulty design and inability to evaluate impact.

-- Monitoring can be used not only to establish accountability but also to feed information back into the program system to improve performance and impact.

Discussion

Monitoring in Mali was carried out by USAID Mission staff, including full-time food monitors, and by the PVOs and international organizations participating in the program. In general, it proved possible to keep careful track of the food; monitoring was facilitated by the availability of specific plans for food distribution. In Sudan, monitoring was slow in getting underway. Chad's food action committee, with its mobile assessment teams, also played an effective role in monitoring the results, but more monitors were needed to evaluate the general feeding program.

In all three countries, the PVOs were able to recruit native speakers who could help monitor food distribution. International organizations (e.g., WFP, UNICEF, LICROSS) had fewer resources available for monitoring but did well where the beneficiaries were targeted.

Although some very good micro-studies were done in all three countries by voluntary agencies (e.g., CARE, OXFAM, LICROSS, MSF, Save the Children), broader based evaluations with quantitative measurements were stymied because of the lack of reliable baseline information. Chad, in addition to using mobile teams directly as a monitoring resource, was particularly effective in using monitoring reports to set priorities, adjust programs, and correct errors where necessary. In Mali (beginning in the fall of 1984) and Sudan (especially beginning in mid-1985), USAID Missions hired their own monitors. They provided direct informational links that were very helpful in solving operational problems, as well as in monitoring the programs.

Specific Recommendations

-- USAID Missions, in working out arrangements with PVOs and international organizations (e.g., WFP or LICROSS) to help distribute emergency food, should ensure adequate
funding for monitoring. This is particularly true when PVOs are assisting host governments in general distribution where the at-risk groups may not be as well targeted as in food-for-work and child feeding efforts.

-- USAID Missions and other donors should work with host governments to strengthen their monitoring capability. Sometimes judicious use of Title II emergency sales proceeds or, possibly, Section 206 funds can provide resources needed for training, transport, and per diem costs of government monitors.

-- USAID Missions in chronic food-deficit and drought-prone

countries should give priority to longitudinal economic/ social/population studies needed to quantitatively measure
effects of droughts and to focus emergency assistance to better alleviate the drought.

-- USAID Missions should build into emergency food assistance
programs funds to provide for additional USAID Mission monitors and to carry out micro-level evaluations
and punctual surveys to assess the success of the program and make midcourse adjustments as necessary.

2.2.10 Lessons Learned: Development/Emergency Food Assistance Linkages

Lessons Learned

-- Linkages between development and emergency food assistance have been very limited.

-- There is substantial scope for improving these linkages, particularly if a greater effort is made to preplan for food emergencies and to deal with drought and food shortages before crisis situations emerge.

-- Development-oriented uses of food can be an important element in "drought-proofing" drought-prone areas.

-- The most effective emergency food assistance programs are those designed to be integrated with regular food aid and a national food strategy.

Discussion

When there is no food emergency, beneficiaries, governments, and donors usually concentrate on attaining development objectives (e.g., a sustained increase in real per capita income, equitable income distribution, and a better quality of life). For households in rural areas, increased income and quality of life depend mostly on growth in agricultural productivity and output.

During the 1984-1985 drought, and for several years before, some vulnerable groups lost their ability to grow or purchase food. Many had no income that year, and their reserves were already exhausted from the effects of prior drought years. Consequently, their food purchasing power in 1984-1985 collapsed, leading directly to malnutrition and even starvation. Donors and country governments treated this situation as an emergency and separated their response to it from their normal development activities.

This is unfortunate because the same problem, lack of adequate income, is at the root of both underdevelopment and food emergencies. Thus, an essential linkage between development and emergency activities for those affected by drought is household/

individual income. Development activities are deliberately and carefully planned and operated to ultimately increase the income levels of poor households. Emergency activities usually are designed simply to feed people and reduce their suffering. Thought is not always given to dealing with longer term income development. Ideally, the movement from development to emergency activities and back by government and donors would rely on many identical modes of intervention -- those aimed at increasing the income and quality of life of the poor household quickly as well as over time. Thus, if an emergency food assistance program can address both immediate and longer term income needs, it is correctly focused and developmental.

In Sudan, there was little linkage between the emergency food and development programs, except for the use of the PL 480 Title I program already in place to meet urban needs. The lack of existing or planned development activities that could be supported with food and the severe and sudden nature of the 1984-1985 emergency virtually precluded detailed consideration of emergency-development linkages. As a result, even simple rehabilitation responses such as the provision of seed were initiated very late, and potential linkages were not explored. For example, one emergency-development linkage that could have received attention was whether in situ feeding that retained people in arid, agriculturally marginal areas was appropriate or whether emergency feeding programs should be designed to draw volunteers into more productive areas. The program did retain most affected persons in situ, a result that had some development value by keeping people where they could return to farming easily once the rains returned.

In Chad, several emergency-development linkages developed fortuitously, rather than purely by design. When the Government of Chad decided to stop people from immigrating to N'Djamena, it needed places for them to go. The locations identified were wadis that ultimately were shown to have some agricultural potential even during the drought. Exploiting this potential and meeting the immediate food needs of the people resulted in food-for-work and training activities (e.g., in special irrigation techniques) that combined emergency food with activities directly related to longer term development objectives. As the emergency has abated in Chad, the emergency food and action committees have been directed toward ensuring that drought victims can make the transition back to development activities.

In Mali, the linkage between the emergency food assistance program and development efforts was very close in the sense that the emergency program was designed to take into account objectives of the important national grain market restructuring project to avoid disruption of local markets. (In fact, the Government of Mali appeared too conservative in programmming emergency distributions for rural areas because of this concern.)

In addition, regular food aid was combined with emergency food to meet the overall national food deficit and the food needs of urban areas.

Little was done, however, to link emergency and development activities in rural areas. Existing food-for-work activities, for example, were not expanded much, and relief and

rehabilitation activities were given too little attention. One reason for this lack of linkage is that USAID/Mali's development program focused on the more productive south and did not include activities among the groups and areas in the north most affected by the drought. Although this did not preclude using emergency food more developmentally, it did contribute to the tendency to treat the emergency as something to be put behind in order to give full attention to the ongoing development effort in the south. The USAID Mission Country Development Strategy Statement did not take enough account of measures for drought-proofing and restructuring agriculture, livestock, and rural economics in drought zones.

In Sudan there was little linkage between the food emergency and longer term development in the original emergency food assistance program design (except in meeting urban needs through PL 480 Title I programming). This led to very late rehabilitation responses. The scope for development linkages in Sudan (which is normally a food-surplus country) was less than in countries like Mali and Chad.

Specific Recommendations

-- The capacity of country governments to manage drought and emergency food shortages should in itself be viewed as a development goal.

-- A.I.D./Washington should provide guidance to USAID Missions on linking A.I.D. development planning and programming with drought planning and emergency assistance preplanning and project design.

-- Much of the information required for emergency food assistance preplanning, needs assessment, targeting, and project design is also required for development planning. Because this key information is essential and can be obtained, efforts to collect and analyze it should be incorporated in drought preparedness and development programs by host governments and donors.

-- USAID Missions in the most at-risk countries should be charged to work with the host government and other donors to devise cost-effective systems for collecting the food and agricultural and rural income data needed for both emergency food assistance planning and development programming; the approach normally should be one of helping the government cost effectively decentralize the collection of reliable food, agricultural, and rural income data in drought-prone regions by relying on local and district organizations and authorities working under the coordination of regional or central government.

-- A.I.D./Washington should ask USAID Missions to increase food-for-work or cash-for-work activities (in conjunction

with monetized food assistance) in rural, chronically drought-prone areas prior to and as part of emergency food responses; USAID Missions in each of the most vulnerable countries should experiment with local or village management of such projects to identify ways to expand them quickly during food emergencies; specific food-for-work, cash-for-work, and other projects that use food should be developed as shelf projects for drought-prone areas.

-- USAID Missions in the most vulnerable countries should take into account the need for drought planning and emergency food assistance preplanning as part of their country development strategic planning.

-- USAID Missions should work with host governments and other donors to support systematic studies of drought-prone areas in the most vulnerable countries to increase knowledge of local conditions facing rural populations and of opportunities for local development and drought-proofing. Such studies should be seen as an integral part of planning for drought and development; they should be carried out as far as possible by indigenous institutions and specialists.

-- USAID Missions should work with host governments and other donors to design emergency food assistance programs to support the development process by the following:

- Building central and regional government capabilities and competence to plan for and manage emergency food and disaster relief programs

- Involving local and district government institutions in planning and implementing such programs

- Improving the management capabilities of indigenous PVOs

- Enhancing the capacity of the private sector, particularly in transport and food supply, to meet unusual demands for emergency food supply in rural areas

- Assisting affected populations to recover and move back to a development mode as soon as possible

-- USAID Missions in the most vulnerable countries should be prepared, if political and other factors permit, to work closely with the host government and other donors on the provision of regular food aid (possibly under Section 206, PL 480) as structural support for national programs to effect necessary changes and economic reforms. This should include provision of real economic incentives to producers required to restructure food and agricultural production and distribution and thus help to realize long-term development objectives for food self-sufficiency in the framework of rural and urban

development.

3. GENERIC LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING U.S. FOOD EMERGENCY RESPONSES

3.1 Summary: Guidelines for Successful Emergency Food Assistance Responses

Responses by the United States and others to emergency food situations have five main parts: preplanning or preparation for an emergency, identification of an emergency, preparation for responding to it, implementation of the planned response, and monitoring and evaluation of the results. This resembles the normal project cycle, but although the framework is similar, the concept and practice are not. Food emergencies move at a faster pace than does project development and provide less time for identification, planning, or implementation. Thus, program preparation for food emergencies is done more quickly and with much less formal documentation.

Given the faster pace and less rigid planning requirements for food emergencies, generic lessons learned for policymakers and practitioners dealing with emergency food assistance are especially important because they provide helpful guidance for those faced with these emergencies. Because guidance is most helpful and easily incorporated into the stream of action when it is in familiar form, this preplanning, identification, preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation format is used to organize the guidelines on generic lessons learned (see Box 1). The guidelines are directive; they are intended to guide practitioners in what to do. Thus, they are framed as instructions: for example, provide adequate resources, use PVOs, act early.

The guidelines, plus the generic lessons learned that follow, can be used by experienced A.I.D. staff as beginning points in dealing with food emergencies. If the A.I.D. staff has access to a fast track for decisions, future U.S. emergency food assistance responses could be even more successful than past ones.

3.2 Preplanning

Preplanning is, in major part, the advance consideration of important elements of an as yet undefined food emergency -- what these elements are, how they interrelate, and how to intervene effectively with respect to any or all of them to resolve a food emergency situation successfully. Once preplanning has been carried out, the country is in an improved state of food emergency preparedness.

In Sudan, one of the principal reasons the 1984-1985 food emergency effort was not as successful as hoped was the lack of preparation for dealing with the consequences of another year of drought. Although 1984-1985 was the fourth year of drought, there still was a dearth of information about its impact and the

capacity of the country to deal with it. Without having thought through such issues as the capability of the logistics system and which Government of Sudan institution would be given authority to meet the demands of the food emergency, no solid basis existed for donors or the Government to respond rapidly to the food emergency situation.

Which countries should preplan? Any country with a history of drought, even if spotty, should preplan. Also, any country with even faint reason to suspect that a food emergency is occurring or might occur should preplan. Finally, countries already experiencing drought should preplan, even in the face of great optimism about the coming rains. The extent of preplanning and of institutionalized preplanning capability can be made proportionate to the degree of risk that food or other emergencies will occur. Thus, a country with no drought for many years might need less institutionalized preplanning capability than one in which droughts recur. If drought recurs from year to year, this capability should grow in proportion to the risk of still another year of drought.

Several lessons have been learned with respect to preplanning from the 1984-1985 experiences in Africa.

Box 1. Guidelines for Successful Emergency Food Assistance Responses

A. Preplanning

1. Begin before there is a problem

2. Develop a baseline

3. Establish early warning capability

4. Appoint central decision-makers ahead of time

B. Identification

1. Obtain early warning and other important information

2. Make decisions early

C. Preparation (four key decisions)

1. What response will be made?

- Assess needs accurately
- Establish clear program objectives
- Target carefully, using health/nutrition and socioeconomic criteria
- Aim emergency interventions at the income problem, especially for the longer term (this will root emergency activities in the development context)
- Keep people where their development potential is best
- Provide adequate resources--food, personnel, money, and material

- Package general and supplemental food and health inputs together

2. How will the response be made?

- Seek host government coordination and local government involvement
- Obtain donor coordination
- Create a fast decision track in Washington headed by a full-charge U.S. decision-maker
- Target food through existing development mechanisms (e.g., food for work, monetization)
- Prepare contingency plans
- Pre-position in rural areas prior to the rainy season
- Ensure satisfactory logistical support

Box 1. Guidelines for Successful Emergency Food Assistance Responses (cont.)

3. Who will make the response?

- Involve the public sector at the local and national levels
- Use the private sector
- Guarantee excellent management at USAID Missions
- Use PVOs

4. When will the response be made?

- Act early (based on early warning/stages-of-drought data)
- Stay late (if necessary).

D. Implementation (11 critical elements)

1. Objective

- Clear program objectives

2. Organization and management

- A fast decision track in Washington, D.C., headed by a full-charge decision-maker
- Good, experienced USAID Mission management and sufficient staff
- Adequate host government support
- Effective donor coordination
- Timely decisions and actions

3. Program content

- Key information
- Adequate resources
- Proven delivery mechanisms
- Good logistics
- Integrated emergency/development activities

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

1. Establish monitoring capability

2. Monitor and evaluate for impact

1. Preplanning must be undertaken before there is a food emergency. If preplanning begins only when a food emergency becomes evident, the preplanning stage is mostly lost, collapsing into the identification stage and disappearing in the rush to identify the problem and do something about it. Preplanning should establish an early warning system, identify key decisionmakers, assess the logistics system, identify vulnerable groups, develop agreed-on criteria for declaring an emergency, and so on. Such disaster preparedness pays very large dividends in speeding up program response and increasing program impact and cost-effectiveness. In some cases it will help overcome a government's difficulties in declaring a food emergency by putting in place agreed-on means for warning of an emergency and the criteria for defining one.

2. Baseline information is essential to enable accurate early warning and good program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation; it needs to be developed before an emergency occurs because it is difficult and too late to do so once an emergency is underway. Baseline information needed for program impact assessment includes the size of the population by area, the nutritional and medical condition of different population strata, the birth and death rates of the population by age groups, the economic situation of different types of households, how households deal with food versus money, what food people prefer, and so forth.

For program administration and management assessment, baseline data would include the capacity of the logistics system, the amount and location of grain storage, and the personnel strengths and financial capacity of executing institutions (e.g., government, PVOs).

Obtaining all desirable baseline information is not necessary or possible. However, a continuing effort to build a baseline as suggested above is an important aspect of preplanning.

Developing baseline data can be costly. However, emergency food programs are very costly, amounting to one-quarter billion dollars in Sudan and three times the development budget in Mali in 1984-1985. These are huge resource transfers, and efforts to document and improve their impact (such as baseline development) would pay dividends in planning, implementation, and political terms. Moreover, the baseline data needed for emergency purposes is identical to that needed for development programs. Developing such data will create information about and relevant to vulnerable groups and households that will help in planning and implementing both emergency and development efforts.

3. Early warning can greatly increase emergency food program success, but the information provided by early warning systems is not yet reliable or timely enough to enable early definitive decisions agreed on by all concerned parties. Early warning systems need to obtain and interpret climatic, crop,

livestock, market, and individual and group activity (different responses to drought over time) data in order to forecast and warn of a food emergency. These systems are not developed fully, even in chronic-drought countries. Improving them could increase the impact and cost-effectiveness of emergency food assistance efforts. The improved outputs (i.e., data) of these systems also would provide important information for ongoing development efforts.

Early warning systems do not yet provide the timely, reliable information that decision-makers need. Stages-of-drought indicators are not yet an operational feature of country early-warning or drought-response efforts. Needs assessment activities are not timely in most cases, and targeting depends mostly on judgments (not data) made well after the emergency food response is underway. As a result, bilateral donors and other decision-makers are sometimes slow to decide that a food emergency exists and what response to make.

Much effort already is flowing into satellite and other higher technology approaches. In addition, local capability and efforts to obtain critical information should be expanded. Regular local government reporting on market prices, for example, could be arranged. As more information about known vulnerable groups becomes available, telltale signs of drought-led income or other potential problems can be spotted more easily.

4. Selecting key decision-makers ahead of time within the host country, A.I.D., and other organizations as part of the preparedness effort helps achieve a more rapid, effective emergency response. In some food emergencies, information has been available but not acted on for want of a person charged with the responsibility of deciding. If relevant decision-makers are known prior to the identification of a problem, the issue is likely to be dealt with sooner and more decisively. This selection of decision-makers during the preplanning stage also serves as a device to identify in advance a formal or informal nucleus of leaders should there later be a need to move from the preplanning stage to implementation.

Recommendation: Preplanning should begin early by concerned governments, perhaps with USAID Mission or other donor assistance. It should include such elements as the following:

-- Identifying the potential at-risk segments of the population in the event of a drought

-- Undertaking studies to ascertain the kinds of food that might be needed in a drought

-- Obtaining baseline data on nutrition, health, population, and other variables in potential emergency areas, because without this information it is almost impossible to evaluate needs and success or failure of any program in terms of the number of lives saved or lost

-- Assessing the logistic capabilities of transport systems such as port capacity; railroad, road, and water transport (capacity per day available to

transport food); government contracting ability; and financial arrangements

-- Identifying food distribution modes (free distribution, food for work, monetization) and food distribution channels (PVOs, government) and developing plans for the use of those thought to be most appropriate

-- Establishing an early warning system and predisaster planning nucleus group, perhaps drawing on the key ministries for personnel. (Use of local government resources to provide early drought warning information should be part of this effort. The United States, working with the United Nations, should be prepared to help countries develop these systems.)

-- Selecting key decision-makers (in host country, USAID Mission, A.I.D./Washington, other agencies) and charging them with responsibility for deciding what should be done ahead of the actual emergency as a part of the preparedness effort for an emergency food response

-- Setting up criteria for determining when to declare an emergency, thus making it easier for governments to admit a food crisis exists and to declare a national emergency earlier

3.3 Early Identification of a Food Emergency

Early definitive identification of a food emergency is the first step in providing effective assistance. The initial planning phase of a food emergency assistance program is the next step. Both steps in this identification process involve key information and key decisions. The timeliness of the information and the decisions made also is important.

1. Key information is essential to identify the need for emergency food assistance and to begin planning for it, but it is seldom readily available or accurate. The information needed to identify a potential or emerging food emergency, and to carry out the program identification effort for dealing with it, can be classified as early warning stages of drought, needs assessment, and targeting data. Early warning data involve items such as rainfall patterns, potential harvests, and price changes. They include the physical manifestations of a drought, which -- if the government or donors are paying attention -- can be identified and even forecast with substantial accuracy.

When droughts are prolonged, peoples' responses to them differ over time, producing longitudinal patterns that can be grouped loosely into stages. These stages-of-drought data include such things as sales of household stocks (e.g., food, jewelry, cattle) or movements of family members to obtain food or work. These are responses of people affected by the drought, responses that reflect and can be correlated with the physical manifestations of a drought -- especially if it is prolonged. The responses of people differ by virtue of their income/wealth

levels. Thus, certain responses of vulnerable groups are indicative of the degree to which they are coping successfully with drought. Numerous efforts have been made to specify responses that serve as indicators of the impact of drought on the people affected.{4} Whether they occur in a short or long time frame, specific indicator responses, if identified early, can trigger timely action that will keep a situation from worsening. Moreover, the action taken can be more developmental rather than strictly relief oriented.

Other key information for initial program planning includes needs assessment (estimates of overall food shortfalls and localized food requirements) and targeting, which encompasses data
enabling identification of disadvantaged persons individually and by household, group, or geographic area. These types of data are generally not available as an outgrowth of ongoing development programs, but they could make a direct contribution to those programs as noted earlier.

Recommendation: Since this key information is essential and can be obtained, efforts to collect and analyze it should be incorporated in drought preparedness and development programs by host governments and donors.

2. Central decisions to declare that a food emergency exists and to undertake an emergency assistance effort are usually better when made early, even if the information in support of the decision is incomplete. Decisions about food emergencies are needed in the host government, USAID Missions, and A.I.D.. Usually decision-makers among other donors and elsewhere in Washington also become part of the process.

Decisions can seldom be made with certainty at the point where a food emergency is just being discovered or suddenly emerges. The "right" information may not be available. The decision-maker at each of the key decision points has not been identified. The host government may not want to admit to the possibility of an emergency. A.I.D. may not be certain enough of its facts to defend a decision to proceed with emergency food aid programming or to step in and push the system along even faster. USAID Missions may see the problem as needing a more development-oriented solution such as food for work, but may lack the resources to prepare such a program.

Despite these data problems, decisions can and usually must be made if the need is urgent. Thus, the general magnitude of the problem can usually be determined, the at-risk groups can be roughly identified in the most severely affected areas, and the general level of the crops (good, bad, nonexistent) can be assessed. Specifying key decision-makers early as part of drought preparedness efforts helps overcome some of these problems.

Likewise, development programs aimed at "drought-proofing" (making groups who are vulnerable to drought better able to cope with drought before it occurs) sometimes make these decisions easier because the emergency food assistance can flow through the drought-proofing infrastructure already in place.

Not all food emergencies are hidden or sudden. Many grow

quite slowly into the vast emergencies they ultimately become. Timely decision-making, not data availability or accuracy, is the critical factor in these situations.

Recommendation: Decision-makers should be given support and authority ahead of time to switch gears from development to emergency status when deciding whether a food emergency exists
and whether to begin program identification steps. They should be encouraged to shorten dramatically their decision time line, fore-going information to gain essential time whenever necessary.

{4} See, for example, the work of Ellen Brown in the evaluation of the U.S. responce to the famine in Chad.

3.4 Sound Preparation of Emergency Food Assistance Programs

Emergency food assistance program design criteria are not as strict as other A.I.D. design efforts. The reasons for this vary. The emergency may be too sudden, many others are involved (host government and other donors), USAID Missions may give the emergency low priority as a program or may not even view it as an activity with program components, or the nature and dimension of the emergency may not be known sufficiently to plan.

Planners of emergency food assistance programs may not be held to strict criteria, but the quality and effectiveness of their design work is important. Many millions of dollars are involved in these efforts, sometimes much more than the total development assistance effort for a country. Such large resource transfers should be planned as carefully as possible.

This evaluation provides some lessons learned that will improve emergency food assistance planning. Four key decisions are needed to move from the point where a food emergency has been discovered and a program tentatively identified to deal with it, to initiating actual emergency food assistance. These are as follows:

- What response will be made?
- How will the response be made?
- Who will make the response?
- When will the response be made?

3.4.1 What Response Will Be Made?

This decision can range from "no response at all" to "feeding every at-risk person 430 grams per day" (Sudan). If a response is to be made, several generic lessons learned should be considered when framing it.

1. Needs assessment is a critical element of planning; donor and host government involvement in carrying it out helps solidify agreement on the accuracy of the assessment and the magnitude of the problem. The assessment of need in a country is

central to the planning of an emergency response. As planning moves to the preparation stage, detailed needs assessment can serve several purposes. It can heighten the accuracy of need estimates, increase donor concurrence on the nature and extent of the need, help attain the host government's agreement on the existence of an emergency, assist in targeting, and generally help in formulating the remainder of the emergency food program.

> Recommendation: The needs assessment capabilities of A.I.D., host governments, and other donors should continue to be strengthened as an element of emergency food assistance.
>
> Special emphasis should be given to improvement in logistic capacity assessment, identification and assessment of stages-of-drought responses, and medical/nutritional and economic assessment for targeting purposes.

2. Clear program objectives are the principal means by which emergency food assistance programs are focused and guided; in fast-paced food emergency situations, it is easy to lose sight of objectives, resulting in less effective and efficient program activities. Food emergencies may creep up on decision-makers, but by the time they begin to be dealt with definitively, they often are fast-paced, chaotic events. If the objectives of the program do not remain crystal clear, the press of wants can result in operations that are not directed toward those objectives.

If objectives are sharply in focus, they can be used as guides for program activities (e.g., we know what our objectives are and how this activity contributes to them).

Program objectives shape most aspects of planning and implementation. If emergency conditions cause an objective to change, then program activities are likely to change also. If a program objective is to feed people so that as many as possible will survive, certain distribution modes (e.g., free food distribution) and channels (e.g., local government) may be selected. If the objective of the program then changes to using food more to enhance the development aspects of a situation (e.g., during the transition from the emergency to normal development activities), the initial distribution modes and channels need to be reexamined too. The latter case may require more nonfood resources, alternative distribution channels, and different levels and kinds of governmental involvement.

> Recommendation: Specific emergency food assistance program objectives should be established to help guide program activities. These objectives should be altered when conditions dictate, at which time program activities may need to be altered too.

3. Targeting is critical for impact and cost-effectiveness and should be used in the preplanning of needs assessments, preparation, and implementation phases of emergency food assistance programs.{5} Targeting is an important mechanism for ensuring that resources go in a timely manner to those areas and population groups that need them most. Effective targeting

increases the cost-effectiveness of both development and emergency programs and helps ensure that resources are not wasted.

Recommendation: In the context of emergency programs, targeting is critical and should be considered in the preplanning, identification, preparation, and emergency implementation phases in the following manner:

-- Preplanning: Development projects should be targeted to drought-prone areas and to those groups most severely affected by drought to increase their capacities to combat drought and overcome the causes of famine.

-- Preparation: In the early stages of a drought, resources should be targeted to population groups that are beginning to experience serious loss of income or detrimental changes in consumption, living patterns, and so forth. An early warning system should include indicators sensitive to changing socioeconomic status and patterns that suggest the potential for serious food and nutrition problems.

-- Implementation: In the later stages of a drought, both micro-level socioeconomic data and nutrition/health data should be used to target resources and food to the worst-affected areas. Within these areas, household economic data and individual nutritional status data, along with other at-risk indicators, should be used to target households or individuals experiencing serious health and nutritional problems.

4. Where food emergencies are chronic, development always takes place in a potential emergency context, but this is seldom accounted for in planning and implementing development assistance. Development programs need to concentrate on drought-proofing groups most vulnerable to loss of income from drought. Such programs will provide ready-made mechanisms for making emergency food assistance more developmental.

There is little linkage in either direction between emergency food programs and development programs in drought-prone countries. It is probably more important for development efforts to concentrate on the income problem of drought-vulnerable and drought-prone people than for emergency food assistance to do so. In Mali, for example, the USAID Mission's development program is little focused on the geographic areas where most of the 1984-1985 drought victims were located. If no effort at all is made to deal with the development problems of people in drought-prone areas, famine, with its huge associated costs, is likely to revisit them periodically. Drought-proofing to avoid this may become the central development issue in Africa if recurring drought-caused income collapse and famine on a major scale are to be avoided.

Recommendation: In chronic-drought countries, development activities should focus on groups vulnerable to

drought-caused income collapse as one direct means of avoiding recurring famine. If drought does occur, these development programs should be the first mechanisms for providing emergency food assistance.

5. Emergencies always take place in a development context, but development is seldom accounted for in planning and implementing emergency food assistance activities. Emergency food programs need to deliberately keep beneficiaries in their highest order development "plane" -- be that in situ, in resettlement schemes, or in camps -- to be most effective.

Prior to the occurrence of a food emergency, beneficiaries, governments, and donors are usually concentrating on attaining development objectives (e.g., a sustained increase in real per capita income, equitable income distribution, and a better quality of life). Thus, AID's development assistance is a set of activities focused principally on the poor in the country and designed to help them achieve development objectives. Stated in simple economic terms at the household level, development activities seek to increase and stabilize the income of poor households. Where these households are in rural areas, much of the needed income increases must come from growth in agricultural productivity and output levels.

During a food emergency, such as the one related to the drought in Africa in 1984-1985, some vulnerable groups lose their ability to grow or purchase food. Governments and donors tend to assist these groups by concentrating on relief -- reducing human suffering and helping save lives in danger from lack of food. Thus, some poor people and some government, donor, and international agencies will move from a development to an emergency situation and, over time, back to development activities as the emergency recedes. Invariably, emergency activities are treated independently of development activities.

This is unfortunate because the same problem -- lack of adequate income -- is at the root of both underdevelopment and food emergencies. Thus, an essential linkage between development and emergency activities for those affected by drought is household/individual income. Development activities are deliberately and carefully conceived and operated to ultimately increase the income level of the poor household. Emergency activities usually are designed simply to feed people and reduce their suffering. Thought is not always given to dealing with the emergency via activities that lead to immediate and longer term income development. Ideally, the movement from development to emergency activities and back by government and donors would rely on many identical modes of intervention -- those aimed at increasing the income and quality of life of the poor household quickly and over time.

Figure 1 helps illustrate the fundamental linkage between the development problem and the usual food emergency problem. It shows development and emergency "planes" for a typical rural

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household dependent on agriculture for its income. Operating above line AA', development activities in years 1, 2, and 3 enable the family to increase its food output and income. In these years, surplus output enables the household to "save," perhaps in food stocks, but also in money, jewelry, and other items. In year 4, food output and income fall -- the result of the first year of a drought. To meet its current food consumption requirements, the family would use part of its savings, send a family member elsewhere to work, and so forth. Years 5, 6, and 7 show the continuing damaging effects of the drought on the family's food output and income. If the family's reserves are inadequate, as they are for most poor people, its lack of purchasing power results in inadequate nutrition or starvation (i.e., it cannot purchase enough food to return its consumption to the AA' level). The response of the household to these various years, and within years, corresponds to the stages-of-drought data mentioned earlier.

Programming that directly confronts this income problem -- lack of effective demand for food--and helps solve it for the longer run most often deals with the food emergency in development terms. Figure 1 illustrates this concept. A drought-induced food emergency creates income loss that can be replaced by food for work, cash for work, capital input, or technical assistance for productive projects aimed at improved development. Food or cash for training or new enterprise initiation also encourages productive activity and immediately replaces lost income. Wadi resettlement in Chad is an example. Seed distribution provides current income supplements and has potential longer term productivity payoffs. General and supplemental feeding, free health care, and defense of local terms of trade for pastoralists (i.e., purchase of cattle they are forced to sell at "normal" grain/cattle price ratios rather than the distorted one resulting from drought-caused high grain prices) also confront the income problem, but they are less developmental.

As implied in Figure 2, normal development activities aimed at increasing income and quality of life in the longer term are directly relevant responses to a food emergency, especially if the emergency is discovered early. In such cases, development program mechanisms and interventions can be expanded and redirected toward meeting emergency needs. Thus, an emergency in many circumstances can be viewed as a more severe state of the same problems as exist in the "development plane" and can be dealt with using existing interventions aimed at the same constraints. Food-for-work efforts in the emergency would still aim to expand agricultural water availability, fuelwood supplies, cattle dip tanks, and on-farm or in-village crop storage. Skill training in brick making or agricultural implement repair could still be done on a cash-for-work basis. Road or bridge repair or building might continue as normal development activities to assist in curbing the emergency. Food sales would continue,

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nationally and locally, to stabilize the terms of trade for pastoralists and others. Monetized emergency food could be added in some cases. Livestock upgrading, seed improvement and supply,

and agricultural implement distribution efforts could go on as appropriate during the emergency and be increased as the drought abates.

This extension of development activities into the emergency period can make good use of food for development purposes. As the emergency abates, food uses can be maintained as development efforts and to diminish existing constraints, or they can be reduced or eliminated. Thus, it is possible to go into and out of the "emergency plane" using only developmental activities. This obviates the need for labeling stages as development, emergency, and recovery and rehabilitation. It emphasizes developmental interventions to track the income problem into and out of food emergencies. It uses food, one of the United States' most important and plentiful development tools, as a key ingredient in handling an emergency in the context of development.

Income supplements using food can be added in this schema to meet the immediate needs of those without income or the means to attain it. This might include providing pastoralists with a food-for-cattle exchange or feeding families without excess labor or unable to work. Food sales might also be needed to resolve a local or national food supply problem.

Recommendation: Food emergency activities should be firmly rooted in the development context in which they are undertaken. They should aim to increase beneficiaries' income directly, both in immediate terms and for the longer run. Emergency uses of food that build up individual/household, community, or national assets should be preferred. These uses should be linked directly to development needs so they can serve emergency or development goals.

Food emergency activities should be used to deliberately retain beneficiaries where their development plane potential is highest, whether in situ, resettlement, or camp.

6. Adequate resources are necessary for every emergency food response and have maximum impact when packaged together -- food, money, material, and technical assistance personnel. Under-resourcing one or more of the key inputs necessary for successful emergency food assistance efforts is common. This may lead to negative rather than positive savings. Lack of additional USAID Mission personnel, for example, to help integrate the very large food assistance resource flows with the ongoing development program may diminish the potential development impact of emergency food resources, resulting in unnecessary waste from a development perspective.

The reasons for providing inadequate resources are multiple: funding was unavailable; other donors did not do their share; adequate information was unavailable to justify additional resources; schedule slippages led to cutbacks in the program; and so forth. Nevertheless, high-quality and effective emergency food assistance cannot be achieved without adequate resource levels packaged appropriately.

Recommendation: Every effort should be made to ensure that adequate food, personnel, and other key inputs needed for a successful emergency food program are available and packaged together. A.I.D. should establish a system that would enable it to draw on its most experienced and capable talent quickly and efficiently throughout the Agency to help deal with droughts or other emergencies when they occur.

7. General and supplemental feeding and emergency food and health inputs belong together, and their complementary packaging helps to maximize the success of emergency food assistance efforts. When general feeding is planned and implemented separately from supplemental feeding (as was the case in Sudan and Mali), the emergency program does not meet the needs of many of the most nutritionally disadvantaged as effectively as possible. Health inputs are very seldom integrated with in situ feeding efforts. This leaves badly undernourished children susceptible to death from normally nonlethal diseases such as measles and diarrhea.

Recommendation: General and supplemental feeding shipments should be planned and implemented as joint programs unless there are obvious reasons not to do so. Basic health care and
medicines should be integrated with efforts to meet minimal food requirements.

{5} Hope Sukin, of A.I.D.'s Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance, made a major contribution to this section.

3.4.2 How Will the Response Be Made?

This key decision deals with organizations and substantive mechanisms for making the desired emergency food response. Examples of the former are: How will the policy framework and food allocations be established? How will food be moved into rural areas? Examples of substantive mechanisms are: What mode of distribution will be used -- monetization or free distribution? How will food be packaged with technical assistance and other complementary resources? Necessarily, some of these organizations and substantive mechanisms are integrally involved with "who" questions (i.e., food allocation will be established on the basis of nutritional criteria as interpreted by the local government and PVOs).

1. Central government coordination of organizations carrying out an emergency food assistance program leads to better overall results; local government involvement also increases the effectiveness of emergency food assistance. Overall coordination of food emergency efforts is one element of how emergency food responses should be made. This "coordination of" does not imply "management of" the food emergency, although it can where a national government or other lead agency is capable of doing so. Nor does it require direct control of emergency food supplies.

Coordination does involve the cooperation and support of everyone helping to deal with the emergency. In Chad, for example, WFP and the USAID Mission shouldered large parts of the organizational and administrative burden for the Government of Chad, which was overall coordinator, but the Government established policies and remained in control of the overall effort.

Government coordination is to be preferred because it builds government capacity and institutional memory, sustains governmental dignity, and better positions all parties to support longer term government efforts to prepare for and handle a drought if it occurs again. Coordination by the central government is not essential(as witnessed by the Sudan experience). Where food emergencies are extremely severe and sudden, the government can be bypassed by donors and others for a time.

Local government and village involvement in food emergencies is another organizational aspect of how to respond to food emergencies. It has been actualized in different degrees in different countries -- less in Sudan than in Chad, for example. Malians were little involved in food emergency activities in 1984-1985. Rather, the effort was implemented mostly by young, inexperienced Europeans, who took all their experience with them when they returned home. Local government involvement can help with three functions: information, decisions, and leadership.

Information transmission by local government can be to beneficiaries (e.g., what is happening?) or to those working on the food emergency (e.g., the "grain" price of pastoralists' livestock has fallen sharply). Information of these kinds includes early warning, needs assessments, targeting, food delivery, food-for-work project identification, logistical bottlenecks, monitoring, publicity, and so on. Building up the capability of local government (and nongovernmental organizations) to identify and report such information contributes to drought preparedness and emergency food assistance program implementation.

Decisions by local governments (even if they only ratify the preparatory work of donors or PVOs) dealing with food allocations, food-for-work projects, and so forth often have an authority with beneficiaries that PVOs or donors operating by themselves do not possess.

Leadership from local government officials often helps in program implementation. For example, local officials can encourage persons considering migration to remain or they can organize food-for-work efforts. If the emergency food assistance program is heavily concentrated on directly supporting development-related projects, the number of "projects" will be large. The role of local government (and other leadership) then becomes central to success because donors do not have sufficient management and technical assistance to support such extensive programs.

Recommendation: Centralized coordination of food emergency assistance efforts should be the norm. AID, other donor, and international organization efforts should support the government in creating an organizational structure with

sufficient authority, resources, and expertise to manage the effort. This structure should include U.S. and other outside resources to supplement agreed-on host government capabilities and contributions.

Local governments should be involved in planning and implementing the emergency food effort. Their capacity to contribute should be expanded during the emergency and via development-related activities carried out afterwards.

2. Donor coordination, especially if it is under the auspices of the national government or an agreed-on lead donor or agency, contributes substantially to effective program planning and execution. When coordination occurs between the capitals of donors as well as in the country involved, it yields better results. Donor coordination is very helpful in the planning and implementation stages of emergency food assistance programs. During planning, donor coordination is necessary to agree on the nature and magnitude of the problem. If important donors are not brought along early, their disagreement or uncertainty can diminish the rapidity and effectiveness of an emergency response.

Donors also agree during the planning stage on what role each will play and what resources each will provide.

During implementation, donor coordination also is important to smooth program operation and achievement of overall objectives. In Sudan, for example, some donors did not fulfill their pledges. This ultimately required extra U.S. resources, but they were programmed late because donor coordination was inadequate. As a result, the impact and cost-effectiveness of the effort were diminished.

Recommendation: Donor coordination among capitals and in-country should be ensured under the leadership of the host government or an agreed-on lead international agency or donor.

3. The slow and inflexible decision-making process in the U.S. Government slows emergency responses; flexibility of response and new approaches to rapidly changing emergencies help produce good program results. A less fragmented response by A.I.D./Washington to food emergencies is another important element of how a response should be made. A.I.D./Washington response time to field requests is often too slow, making the eventual U.S. response inadequate. The multiple agencies involved and the lack of effective control of them by those responsible for U.S. emergency food assistance efforts create this difficulty. Within the executive branch some centralization of control was used effectively in 1984-1985. With the help of clear policy guidance from the President, this accelerated U.S. responses and heightened their impact.

A full-charge Washington decision-maker with the time to devote to the issues that arise in dealing with food emergencies, supported by a fast decision track, would make the U.S. bureaucracy more responsive to the needs of USA.I.D. Missions managing emergency food assistance efforts. Explicit public Presidential and Congressional support would make this

decision-making structure even more effective. Such a decision-making apparatus would help USAID Missions better manage program planning and implementation and improve program impact.

Flexibility is central to how food emergency responses should be made. Food emergencies often are volatile in their demands on A.I.D. and others. AID's normal administrative mechanisms sometimes do not provide the quick, flexible responses needed when information flows are erratic, and major crisis can arise with extremely short advance warning.

Recommendation: A fast-track decision-making structure headed by a full-charge decision-maker in Washington should be developed in support of emergency food assistance activities. This fast-track approach should shorten A.I.D./Washington's response time to USAID Missions; this approach should, however, be carried out with full cognizance of the development context of emergency food relief efforts.

A.I.D. should establish a special administrative and funding (and personnel) track once a valid emergency has been identified and a policy decision made regarding U.S. help. This should include, but not be limited to, the following:

-- Simplified administrative procedures for the approval, processing, contracting, and execution of requests for assistance once an emergency has been declared

-- Preparation of policy guidelines for the application of these procedures

-- Delegation to the USAID Mission, when appropriate to local circumstances, of full authority to approve use of counterpart funds, sign contracts, call on A.I.D.-financed resources already in the field, and so forth

4. Development-type programs (e.g., food-for-work and specialized feeding efforts) make excellent targeting mechanisms, enabling beneficiaries to be reached regularly with needed quantities of food. These programs tend to target food to families and groups rather than to geographic areas. In Chad, for example, food was delivered via PVO or WFP programs directly to families. These recipients received larger quantities of food more regularly than those reached through general distribution. Such programs, if they exist at the time the emergency begins, can contribute a great deal to targeting, distribution, and developmental aspects of food emergency programs. As appropriate, such programs can be started as one response to meeting emergency food needs.

Recommendation: When possible, emergency food assistance should be provided via programs targeted to individuals and families. When general distribution is used, it should include substantial monitoring and transport capacity at the

local level.

5. "What if" contingency plans for key elements of the emergency food assistance program are necessary to maximize success. Experience has shown that even the best laid plans can go astray and usually do. Unforeseen events such as changes of government, civil disorders, and shifting governmental priorities can throw a timetable off and call for flexible, quick, imaginative action. To help remedy this situation, it is desirable to have a backup plan.

Contingency plans dealing with critical elements of the emergency plan and its implementation need to be developed in advance. This advance contingency plan preparation is frequently not done in food emergency situations. When something truly unlikely goes wrong during an implementation effort, contingency plans need to be made quickly to correct the problem. This type of contingency plan often is completed and carried out quickly, because the program will falter if it is not.

Recommendation: Emergency food assistance plans should have strong "what if" advance contingency plans for key elements of the program so that planners and implementors have
in mind alternate solutions if the preferred selection does not work.

6. Pre-positioning in rural areas prior to the rainy season greatly increases program impact and cost-effectiveness. Prepositioning emergency food on an international or regional basis to meet potential needs of countries is costly and not always effective. However, transport is difficult or impossible in some rural areas during the rainy season. Therefore, pre-positioning food in rural areas where emergency food needs exist prior to the onset of the rainy season may be necessary. Doing so in a timely manner is a consistent problem, as witnessed by the 1984-1985 efforts in Sudan, Mali, and Chad. Careful planning for this activity will assist in achieving program objectives.

Recommendation: Within each country, emergency food should be pre-positioned in hard to reach rural areas prior to the rainy season. Plans, including contingency plans, should be made for this pre-positioning prior to the beginning of the rainy season.

7. Logistical bottlenecks frequently reduce program results and increase program costs. A food emergency usually requires a surge in logistical activities. It is during this period of pressure on the logistical system that its weaknesses appear most prominently, causing program needs to go unmet. In planning, logistical capabilities need to be realistically assessed and actions specified for using and improving these capabilities as required by the emergency. For example, if private sector trucking is to be used, it will lead to higher freight rates unless there is a large surplus capacity in the trucking industry. Timing is important. If logistical capabilities need to be expanded, it is wise to plan to do so before crisis needs

develop that require superhuman efforts and great costs.

There are potential development aspects of infrastructure improvement. For example, an improved bridge to handle a drought-caused food emergency can be a national asset for further development, as happened in Chad. Private sector involvement in logistics may strengthen the program and can also improve private sector capacity for later development activities. Some logistics improvements, such as rehabilitation of rural roads, can be developmental and, via food-for-work efforts, apply the very food aid the road improvement is intended to facilitate.

Recommendation: Logistical capacity should be assessed early and carefully in every food emergency. Its improvement to enable an emergency food assistance effort to be successful should be planned for and linked directly to the development effort in the country. This plan should provide for a package of inputs, such as infrastructure improvement, additional rolling stock, spare parts, technical and managerial expertise, and money and fuel. Explicit contingency plans for ensuring adequate logistical capacity to support the food emergency should be developed and maintained.

3.4.3 Who Will Make the Response?

Planning for who will carry out the emergency food response is frequently a global effort, although centered in the country of concern. The United States, host government, other donors, PVOs, the United Nations, and other international organizations usually become involved. The lessons learned in this area are discussed below.

1. If the government plays a positive pivotal role in managing and coordinating an emergency effort, the program is likely to have greater impact. For example, the Government of Chad, despite the many constraints of human and financial resources, was seen as a major player in determining the policy framework and allocation of food assistance. It set the policy of in situ feeding which avoided the establishment of camps and massive migration to N'Djamena. It chaired the Food Aid Action Committee, made up of all bilateral, multilateral, and PVO donors in Chad, and took an active role in formulating issues and resolving problems. Government infrastructure was used for the distribution of over 50 percent of emergency food aid. Mechanisms were developed to monitor, to the extent possible, food delivery and to institute appropriate sanctions in cases of abuse.

The donors believed it was essential to consult with and bolster the public sector. As a result, the food assistance activity was well coordinated, relationships between donors and government and among donors were strengthened, and the capabilities of the government, both nationally and regionally, were substantially enhanced. The infrastructure now exists to improve the planning and implementation of development programs and to respond more effectively to future emergencies.

Recommendation: The host government should play a pivotal role in managing and coordinating the emergency effort. Even if it has limited resources at its disposal, it should not be bypassed in the decision-making process. This is especially important in chronic-deficit countries in order to build up an institutional emergency preparedness capacity to respond to future disasters.

2. Government may not be the best implementing agency. Private sector resources, such as PVOs and transport companies, can also be used effectively to meet emergency food assistance needs. Many governments are already overburdened financially and administratively in discharging their normal duties. Their system of administration may not be designed for the fast, flexible action often required when facing drought or other natural calamities. The use of private sector entities and resources is often a better means of achieving emergency food assistance objectives. Transport and distribution of food by the private sector, for example, may be the only way to ensure delivery in a reasonable amount of time in some circumstances. This was true in Sudan, where the use of private trucks to deliver food to PVOs and from PVOs to beneficiaries was essential to program success.

Other areas in which the private sector might help are accounting, reporting systems, fuel supplies, and food processing.

Recommendation: Use of private sector resources (e.g., transport companies) to help meet emergency food assistance needs should be explored and employed wherever feasible to lighten the load on already seriously over-burdened governments.

3. USAID Missions' customary practice of managing emergency food assistance programs by using persons with little or no experience in planning and implementation, and understaffing these efforts as well, reduces program effectiveness. USAID Missions' lack of prior experience in managing emergency food situations is a critical factor influencing program success. This contradicts A.I.D.'s own practice in most other areas where it carefully matches experienced people with their tasks. It results in less well-managed programs with reduced impact and higher costs than necessary.

Moreover, food emergencies, because they tend to be chaotic, fast-moving problems, are highly amenable to good management practices that impose discipline and a strong sense of timing and resource organization and control on situations. These emergencies also are susceptible to experience. A person who has worked on the logistical aspects of food emergencies will be better at dealing with logistical problems again than a person who has never drawn up a food emergency logistics plan.

Recommendation: A.I.D. should assess the management of each food emergency situation. Additional experienced personnel should be supplied if needed, and sound management practices should be required; A.I.D. should establish a system

that would enable it to draw on its most experienced and capable talent quickly and efficiently throughout the Agency as droughts or other emergencies occur. The following recommendations are made with this objective in mind.

-- A.I.D. should establish a computerized roster of Agency personnel by discipline or technical skill who have had previous experience in managing emergency food and nonfood assistance programs. This would provide A.I.D. with the information needed to take full advantage of personnel within the Agency with valuable past experience in countries and at headquarters in this kind of work.

-- A.I.D. should establish special procedures to permit transfer and use of these personnel as needed in a flexible and easy to use system. For example, not all USAID Missions have contract officers or resident legal staff, nor do they have staff such as sociologists, nutritionists, and logistics specialists. Safeguards should be built in to avoid prejudice to personnel in their annual performance evaluations when they are transferred for relatively long temporary duties(3 to 9 months).

-- A roster of contractors and consulting firms with special competence in emergency assistance programs should be established and kept up to date. This should shorten the time required to locate qualified firms or individual skills outside the Agency.

4. With few exceptions, the involvement of PVOs in planning and implementing emergency food assistance programs was an essential factor in the success those efforts. PVOs served as important operational managers of food distribution in most emergency food programs. They helped target those in need, assisted in getting food to them, established development efforts in the middle of the emergency, and carried out food end-use checks. Thus, they were involved effectively in planning, logistics, impact measurement, development programming using food, and many other activities. Some were reluctant to shift from development to relief efforts; some shifted back too soon.

PVOs most frequently hired staff or used volunteers from other countries rather than from host countries. This pattern was particularly striking in Mali. They could do much more to build up country capacity to handle drought situations if they used local personnel more extensively.

Maintaining a state of PVO readiness to handle food emergencies would provide an important reservoir of capacity in chronic food emergency countries. Supporting PVO efforts to drought-proof vulnerable groups using food aid during nondrought periods is one way to do this while also linking development and food emergency assistance more closely during future emergencies.

Recommendation: Use of PVOs (local and foreign) should be considered in all stages of emergency food assistance programs -- identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Their efforts should be supported jointly by the host government, other donors, and USAID and controlled by

the organizational structure agreed on to manage the emergency food effort.

3.4.4 When Will the Response Be Made?

1. Emergency food assistance efforts are time sensitive and require a time-phased action plan; decisions made in developing or implementing emergency food assistance programs nearly always contribute more to program success when made sooner rather than later. Key decisions must be made in a time frame that will allow food to be distributed to people when they need it. If decision-makers ran their emergency food programs by the clock and the calendar, their performance from the viewpoint of beneficiaries would always improve, almost regardless of the quality of their decisions. Thus, in dealing with food emergencies, program managers should decide as far back on the time line for that decision as possible.

Recommendation: Decision makers responsible for emergency food assistance programs should do the following:

-- Establish a time-phased action plan taking into account any seasonal impediments to prompt action and other issues or roadblocks that must be overcome in order to maintain the time-phased action plan.

-- Work with the host government, United Nations, major donors, PVOs, and the private sector to develop integrated plans with firm time schedules for delivery of materials, equipment, manpower, and food needed to mitigate the effects of the emergency.

-- Ensure proper implementation of the time-phased action plan and amend it as unforeseen events and new impediments occur and encourage major donors to do the same.

2. Movement of affected households from the emergency plane to the development plane may take longer than anticipated and require a special blend of emergency food programming. An emergency is not over when the drought has been broken by ample rainfall. Crops are not ready for harvesting when the rain first falls, and the human and financial reserves of people harmed by the drought-caused precipitous drop in income are not yet rebuilt. A drought in the year after the first year of rains may still create grave problems for many of the affected people. Governments and donors seldom plan for such a contingency.

Moving from an emergency to a development plane will involve different actions for different people. Pastoralists may leave a temporary resettlement scheme and attempt to reconstitute their herds. But semisedentary people may not leave the resettlement area at all, preferring it to their former area and way of life. Some younger generation family members, if they have been taught a skill while in a relief camp, may use it in an urban area rather than return to their village. These shifts all constitute a movement toward what the individuals believe will be a higher

order development plane. However, the full shift in any direction is seldom accomplished in even a year. In Turkana, it took most pastoralists 10 years after an emergency food situation was over to fully recover their economic position.

The existence of a long time frame for some to move from an emergency situation back to a normal development situation high-lights the importance of emergency-development linkages. During this transition, food assistance can be useful, especially if it is programmed using development objectives and mechanisms. This is easiest to see when beneficiaries are moving from a situation where they desperately need food to stay alive (an immediate income supplement with no developmental benefits) to a situation where they can now grow some food but need additional food to meet nutritional and annual income needs. Using food-for-work activities in the latter situation to direct energy to creating drainage ditches for irrigated land (food/income for work aimed at creating an individual income-increasing asset) is a more cost-effective and developmental way to solve the income problem of the beneficiaries than to continue to distribute free food. When the people are finally able to grow enough food, the food-for-work activity can be stopped. Perhaps a development project that upgrades the skills of the agricultural extension agent working with beneficiaries (an off-farm development input to increase the productivity of agricultural assets) can take its place. The relative cost-effectiveness of the technical assistance for extension agents is potentially much higher than that of a food-for-work activity, and the relative cost-effectiveness of the food-for-work activity is much higher than that of free food.

Thus, during the transition, as well as during all other stages of a food emergency, emergency food assistance needs to be aimed at solving the long-run income problem of at-risk people. This will maximize the cost-effectiveness of the assistance and help preclude the return of famine. Also, droughts will recur, and people will again require emergency food. The United States, which has major food surpluses, sometimes finds it easier to provide food than cash assistance (especially for development). If the programming of food, even emergency food, can become more developmental, it may become possible to structure global cooperation to achieve more development (i.e., we will provide more food if you will provide more cash).

Recommendation: Emergency food assistance should be provided for as long as it helps cost effectively to solve the income problem of the at-risk people being helped. This time frame should be established independently for each situation and cannot be determined automatically by the same event (e.g., rainfall).

3.5 Successful Implementation of Emergency Food Assistance Programs: Eleven Critical Elements

Preparation of an emergency food assistance program is one thing; implementing it is another. Foreshadowed by all the issues dealt with in program design, successful implementation should deal effectively with the most important of those issues. Our experience in Sudan, Mali, and Chad suggests 11 critical elements to successful implementation of emergency food

assistance efforts. These 11 elements are subelements of three major areas: program objectives, program management and organization, and program content. These elements are shown in Box 2 and examined briefly below. Each ingredient must be viewed statically and over time. That is, effective donor coordination is not a one-time state of affairs, but an effort that must be maintained over time -- throughout the food emergency.

3.5.1 Program Objectives

1. Clearly define program objectives.

Emergency food assistance programs need well-defined program objectives to guide planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Sometimes the objectives of these programs are not specified. For example, if it is not clear that a program objective is to assist very vulnerable groups such as children and lactating mothers, appropriate foods and supplemental feeding mechanisms may not be packaged together with food for general distribution.

Specifying objectives in food emergency assistance programs is important. Emergency circumstances frequently change, and these changes sometimes require new program objectives, approaches, and activities. When program alterations are made under pressure and with limited information, new specific objectives may not be defined and existing objectives may not be focused upon as intently as before. The fast pace and less rigid planning and operating procedures of most food emergencies can foster activities that are not well related to program objectives. The conflicting results and inefficient resource use that results will reduce program effectiveness.

Box 2. Eleven Critical Elements for Successful Implementation of Emergency Food Assistance Programs

-- Objectives
  1. Clear program objectives

-- Management and Organization
  2. A fast decision track in Washington headed by a full-charge decision-maker
  3. Good, experienced USAID management and sufficient staffing
  4. Adequate host government support
  5. Effective donor coordination
  6. Timely decisions and action

-- Program Content
  7. Key information
  8. Adequate resources
  9. Proven delivery systems
  10. Good logistics
  11. Integrated emergency/development activities

3.5.2 Management and Organization

2. Establish a fast decision track in Washington headed by a full-charge decision-maker.

Every set of lessons learned cites the same problem: slow response time in Washington, turf battles, and reasonable people differing on the issues. A generic principle here is that timing is everything. The bureaucracy still must be organized as if it is.

3. Ensure good and experienced USAID Mission management and sufficient staffing.

A.I.D. runs its emergency food assistance programs in the field with whomever happens to be resident in the Mission at the time. It usually does not add management staff to run these programs, but peels some of its development cadre away to manage the emergency effort. These may be good people and experienced development staff. However, most USA.I.D. Mission personnel are not experienced in running emergency food assistance programs, and they do not manage them especially well.

AID persists in under-resourcing food emergencies in terms of its own staff complement. In fact, effective emergency food assistance efforts require large amounts of staff time. Food monitors, for example, are necessary in many cases to supplement USAID personnel and government capabilities.

Using A.I.D. personnel experienced with food emergencies and expanding USAID Mission staff when necessary will add to the cost of the program. Emergency food assistance programs often are larger than the normal development program of a Mission, and they represent large resource transfers. Some additional expenditure to make these huge programs more successful can be justified.

4. Arrange adequate host government support.

Emergency food assistance programs can be undertaken in a variety of ways. Some of these approaches require major host government involvement and support, whereas others do not. In planning an assistance effort, the government support needed for specific program elements will be identified and contingency plans developed to control these elements (in case the host government does not go along or does not perform as agreed). During implementation, the actual achievement of host government support needs to be both an operational and a policy-level effort. Program managers, especially at the USAID Mission level, will have to define the level of support needed, arrange for it, and monitor to see that it is being provided.

The monitoring of host government support and development of contingency plans in case things do not go as expected are important. For example, the government may agree to expand its fuel supplies and supply fuel inland. If it does not perform, donors may have to supply the fuel, perhaps even by airlift. If the actions of the host government are being monitored, it may be possible to identify that they have not placed forward orders for fuel or that they have inadequate foreign currency to purchase it. If these problems are identified early, it may be possible

to encourage or arrange adequate government support in time to avoid a major fuel shortage problem. Even if adequate government support cannot be obtained in this instance, early warning of the problem may enable other arrangements to be made before a major crisis arises.

5. Develop effective donor coordination.

Effective donor coordination, if achieved early, helps ensure a rapid emergency response. During program planning it greatly reduces uncertainty (e.g., who is going to do what; when?). Because different donors agree to undertake various parts of the program, donor coordination during implementation reduces duplicate effort, eliminates some mistakes, and increases program efficiency.

Trading food between donors, for example, can reduce transport requirements and meet beneficiary needs in a more timely manner.

Coordination is best when the information available is best. Standardized and frequent reporting of key information to involved donors during implementation is an important element of donor coordination. As noted in the prior section on preparation, the coordinating mechanism and the way decisions are reached within it also are important aspects of effective donor coordination. A joint government/donor/international agency/PVO coordinating mechanism is more effective than independent coordination between each donor or operating entity and the host government or lead coordinating agency.

6. Make timely decisions and undertake timely action.

Emergency food assistance programs must move at a much faster pace than development programs. To ensure that this pace is achieved, decisions and actions must be timely. Usually, they must occur within a specific and fairly narrow window of time if program effectiveness is to be maximized. Consistently making decisions and taking actions according to such a time-phased action plan will require special procedures (e.g., the delegation of certain legal and contracting authority to USAID Missions and clear lines of authority in Washington). These procedures should be worked out in advance.

Even when special procedures are not available, timely decisions and actions are possible. Quality planning helps, as does experienced management, good host government support, and effective donor coordination. Obtaining key information and ensuring the existence of the other critical elements (see Box 2) also enable greater timeliness. With these elements present in adequate measure, the decision-maker will usually have a basis for deciding and acting within the time dimension of the emergency if willing to risk doing so without the protection of special procedures. In such cases, as occurred in Sudan, it is important that support be given to the rule-or protocol-breaker after the fact by top officials in A.I.D./Washington and other agencies.

3.5.3 Substantive Content of the Program

7. Obtain key information.

Key information in emergency food situations is always insufficient, but it is important. Often little effort is put into obtaining this important information, making its insufficiency a self-fulfilling prophecy. Only if it is valued, insisted on, and worked hard (and intelligently) for, will key information become available. In Mali, for example, special studies were used to get relevant information, and more are planned. A required reporting format and frequency for key variables is one way to pin down what data are available and what is known and unknown; it also helps allocate resources toward providing key information.

Some key information needed to make decisions and take action in emergency food programs is situation specific. However, most key information will be the same for different food emergencies, falling into two categories: problem data and solution data. Examples of key problem information needed are the following:

-- Who is affected by the drought?

-- Where are they?

-- How many are there?

-- How has the drought affected them? (Loss of income? Lack of food supplies locally?)

-- How are people responding to the drought (stages-of-drought response)?

Examples of key solution data needed are the following:

-- What is available to meet the income/food needs of the affected people (food, money, materials, personnel)?

-- Can available food meet the needs of the affected groups (e.g., children)?

-- What delivery mechanisms are available? Which would be most appropriate/developmental?

8. Ensure that adequate resources are available.

The resources needed for an effective emergency food assistance program include much more than food. Management staff, systems, and procedures and key information are essential parts of the resource mix. In addition to these "soft" inputs and food, there will be need for money, transport, technical assistance, equipment, supporting material for food-for-work activities (e.g., seed and hand tools), and infrastructure such as housing, improved bridges, and food storage facilities. These have to be available in the proper proportions and at the right times to maximize program success.

9. Use proven delivery systems/mechanisms.

The means by which food is distributed to end users has a great deal to do with program impact and cost-effectiveness.

After incurring all the effort and cost of moving food thousands of miles and over difficult terrain, its delivery by one means (e.g., general distribution) may have much less impact on the needs targeted than distribution by another means. Where available, existing organized programs of PVOs and other organizations (e.g., food for work, other development activities, supplemental feeding efforts) had more impact than general distribution. The food was better targeted on the nutritional/medical needs of individuals and used more developmentally as well.

Where the income of the affected population is not the problem but a local or national supply shortage is, monetization will be a preferred distribution mechanism. Funds generated could be used via cash-for-work activities to reach groups for whom drought has caused major income shortfall and wealth depletion.

In some situations, such as Sudan in 1984-1985, "proven" delivery systems will not exist. Judgments about which to try should be followed up with intense monitoring of actual end-use, and adjustments should be made based on the information obtained.

10. Organize a good logistics system.

Logistics are fundamental to the successful operation of emergency food assistance programs.{6} The logistics system invariably will need special attention -- repair, fortification, expansion. Use of the private sector to meet the special needs the food emergency placed on the logistics system worked well in Sudan. Good planning, contingency planning, and the use of personnel experienced in the logistical aspects of food emergency implementation will help in organizing and using a good logistics system.

11. Carry out integrated emergency/development activities.

Food emergency programs should be planned to fit smoothly into development efforts. They should aim directly at the income problem of affected people and solve it in the way that most supports development. When the income of farmers has disappeared due to the drought, food can replace it and, at the same time, keep the farmers in their home villages so they can begin crop production immediately when the rains return. Exchanges of food for cattle at reasonable exchange rates may be the most developmentally appropriate way to help pastoralists convert their wealth into income/food. Food-for-work, monetization, and other mechanisms should be used as extensively as possible to ensure that the emergency program is not seen as an isolated event to be disposed of as rapidly as possible in order to get back to development. Rather, programming for food emergencies needs also to be viewed in a development context. Then the structure of the solutions proposed can be measured not only by medical/nutritional and social/humanitarian criteria, but also by development criteria (e.g., to what extent did our emergency food programming help solve over the longer term the low-income problem of those affected by the drought?).

{6} At one point during the evaluation in Sudan, the evaluation team's Landrover ended up in the desert

miles
from anywhere with only three good tires, two flat ones,
and no more tube-patching compound. Having had three prior flat tires that day, the team developed a generic principle: logistics are everything -- be sure you have enough.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation: Guidance Mechanisms for Improving Success

End-use impact and cost-effectiveness determine the success of emergency food assistance programs. To validate and improve these program results requires baseline data, staffing up for monitoring, and the monitoring and evaluation of program impact and cost-effectiveness.

Baseline data need to be developed before a food emergency becomes apparent, ideally during the preplanning stage. When this has not occurred or the baseline developed does not adequately frame aspects of the food emergency that arise, it may be possible to gather some baseline data during the initial stages of the emergency (e.g., the identification and preparation stages). This will be more possible when the emergency develops slowly, as is often the case. The key baseline data needed were noted earlier in the discussion of preplanning activities. The lessons learned are discussed below.

1. Food monitors are essential in many countries to supplement host government, USAID Mission, and PVO monitoring capabilities. Detailed monitoring of emergency food assistance implementation and impact has been very helpful in improving program management/cost-effectiveness and program impact. Monitoring can be carried out by a combination of the host government, PVOs, and A.I.D. direct-hire and contractor employees. When many organizations are involved, consistency of results and reporting of results tend to be problems. Governments sometimes lack the capability to monitor fully the situation, and PVOs themselves need monitoring. Expanding USAID Mission staff to do this monitoring in these cases has produced good results.

Recommendation: Detailed monitoring of emergency food assistance programs should be a part of implementation, and USAID Mission staff should be expanded when necessary to achieve good monitoring results.

2. Monitoring and evaluating for impact provides useful feedback on the effectiveness of emergency programs and how they can be planned and implemented better in the future. The impact of emergency food assistance programs is often difficult to assess. Baseline data are seldom available, no "controls" exist, people are too busy to develop good data, and so forth. As a result, it is usually not possible to determine how well a program
did in terms of saving lives, meeting a proportion of individual diets, reversing severe or serious malnutrition, or curbing the incidence of malnutrition-related medical difficulties. However, to improve emergency food assistance, such assessments are

needed. This requires conscious attempts to establish monitoring and evaluation efforts or systems to detect and measure impact as part of emergency food assistance programs.

Recommendation: Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating impact should be made a part of emergency food assistance efforts, and additional data should be collected to enable the impact of emergency food programs to be determined.

Preplanning should include data collection for baseline purposes that will enable program monitoring and evaluation to assess impact accurately.

APPENDIX A

SCOPE OF WORK

1. BACKGROUND

Emergency food aid shipments to Africa have reached unprecedented levels. Between FY 1983 and 1984, U.S. emergency food aid more than tripled in tonnage and value; by June of FY 1985 approved emergency levels for Title II, Section 416, and food reserves combined have again more than tripled in tonnage (1.8 million metric tons) and quadrupled in value ($738.4 million). For Sub-Saharan Africa alone, the U.S. Government has supplied more than 50 percent of total food aid requirements. In light of the particular chronic nature of the "emergency" in Africa, this substantial commitment cannot be viewed as a one-time event. Not only will continued emergency relief be required in the short term, but given the magnitude involved, this assistance will have significant impact on the future of African development. How we program this food aid in the short and medium term can be an important determinant of whether we have positive or negative effects.

It is in this context that the assessment of our emergency food aid programs is conceived. Based on an evaluation of current operations, we will be exploring options for organizing emergency food aid to alleviate immediate distress while, at the same time, setting the stage for longer term development. This means looking at the larger picture when designing emergency interventions -- the interrelationships between micro projects and macro policies, the linkages between emergency and regular food aid programs as well as with dollar-funded development assistance activities, and the effects of different distribution mechanisms. It means understanding better the smaller picture -- the perceptions of beneficiaries, their socioeconomic and cultural environment, their decision-making processes, and how we can provide for their material needs while preserving a sense of self-worth and human dignity and fostering appropriate changes in behavior patterns. This assessment will provide the opportunity to take stock of our successes and failures to date with a view to programmatic changes and improvements. It is hoped that this review will contribute to improving the effectiveness of our food aid programs in the short and long term and also to developing

new models or documenting existing ones that can be used by other donors and host governments.

As a first step in preparing for this review, the A.I.D. Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance canvassed all USAID Missions in Africa with emergency food aid programs regarding their experience during the 1983/1984 drought. An exhaustive list of questions was cabled to the field, and the response formed the information base for the Lessons Learned paper presented at the Food for Peace Officers Conference in Abidjan in April 1985.

A primary purpose of this assessment will be to verify, supplement, and update this information with field visits, independent data analysis, and the perspective of program participants. Ultimately, we would like to develop guidelines for the design of future emergency food aid programs.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the timeliness, appropriateness, and impact of emergency food aid programs in Africa and suggest ways they can be improved

2. To assist USAID Missions, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), host governments, and other donors in pro gramming future emergency, rehabilitation, and disaster prevention activities

3. To provide A.I.D. and the donor community with lessons learned regarding the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of emergency food aid programs, with emphasis on how they can more effectively foster long-term development initiatives and contribute to increased food security

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The following questions are illustrative of the kinds of issues that should be examined in depth by the evaluation team in carrying out the objectives of this assessment. Emphasis, of course, will vary from country to country and will depend on the particular type of intervention being examined and the degree of severity of the emergency situation. Priority should be given to information gathering and analysis leading to improved programming, redesign, and exploration of new options for the formulation of emergency food aid programs.

3.1 Causes of the Emergency

-- What is the nature of the problem (both immediate and underlying causes)?

-- To what extent is the country's food problem related to

agricultural and macroeconomic policies that may discourage local agricultural production and marketing?

-- How can the basic food problem be best addressed with emergency food aid?

3.2 Preparedness and Contingency Planning

-- Do national procedures exist for responding to emergencies? Are they followed when an actual emergency occurs?

-- Describe the types and levels of public and private sector security stocks, distribution mechanisms, and how they can be used in a disaster situation.

-- What planning activities could be undertaken to strengthen the government's capacity to respond more effectively to structural and emergency food deficit situations? (Consider the political will and financial capability of the host government to handle emergencies in this context.)

-- How do local people normally deal with food shortages and how can this traditional coping behavior be reinforced?

3.3 Donor Coordination

-- Were adequate mechanisms in existence or were they established to coordinate assessments of donor requirements and implementation efforts?

-- Did these function effectively and how might they be improved?

-- Assess A.I.D.'s role in relation to that of the host government and other donors in initiating and sustaining coordination functions.

3.4 Needs Assessment

-- Describe the type of information (e.g., rainfall analysis, nutrition surveillance), collection system, analysis procedures, and use of data for early warning, assessment of requirements, declaration of disaster, design of programs, estimation of food input, and the like.

-- Has the logistical capacity of the government and the private sector been adequately taken into account in determining food aid levels?

-- Assess the accuracy, rapidity, and appropriateness of the needs assessment process and A.I.D.'s contribution.

3.5 Project Design

-- How were target areas and groups of beneficiaries selected?

-- Describe the basic characteristics of the beneficiary population (nomads, sedentary farmers, urban poor, displaced person/refugees), and their relationships to each other. How do these factors influence the food distribution mode selected.

-- Have local food preferences and food consumption patterns of the target population as well as local market prices been adequately considered in the choice of commodities and the selection of distribution systems?

-- Were necessary complementary inputs (i.e., seeds, vaccines, materials, technical assistance) incorporated into the food emergency program?

-- To what extent have participation of beneficiaries and utilization of local organizational structures/resources been built into the project design?

-- How were costs a factor in the design of the program?

-- Were provisions for termination of emergency food aid and/or transition to rehabilitation and longer term development foreseen during the planning stages?

-- Have linkages with regular food aid programs and other complementary resources been explored?

3.6 Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation

-- Did the host government, USAID Mission, PVOs, and local community groups organize themselves effectively to manage the emergency? Discuss in terms of relief planning, organization, resource allocation, postcrisis rehabilitation, and longer term sustainability.

-- What systems are in place for effective commodity accountability and program monitoring? Describe the information generated, costs, manpower, and similar features.

-- What are the respective roles of the host government, USAID Mission, PVOs, community groups?

-- How can management, monitoring, and evaluation be improved?

3.7 Timeliness of Emergency Response

-- Discuss the effectiveness and quantify the exact time frames for the following:

- Needs assessment and project design

- Approval process

- Procurement of commodities

- Delivery of commodities to the country

- Internal distribution of food to the target population

- Arrival of technical assistance

-- Describe constraints and how they were overcome. Suggest ways of expediting these procedures in the future. How can the private sector be used more effectively in the movement of food commodities?

-- If food commodities did arrive late, were appropriate actions taken to avoid disincentive effects on local production and marketing?

3.8 Program Results

To the extent possible, and taking into account the constraints inherent in disaster situations, the evaluation team will present evidence of the effectiveness/impact of emergency interventions in terms of the following:

-- Targeting: extent to which areas and/or victims with greatest need are being reached

-- Coverage: percentage of the affected population being assisted (by the United States, by other donors)

-- Increased availability of food in target areas and consumption by vulnerable groups

-- Incentive/disincentive effects on agricultural production/prices/incomes

-- Improved nutritional and health status of target groups

-- Decreased infant and child mortality

-- Demographic effects: population movements to centers and urban areas, age/sex distribution, and the like

-- Dependency/self-reliance: Have relief programs weakened the self-help capacity of individuals and community groups? How can programs be better organized to reempower individuals and strengthen local decision-making and resource generation/productivity?

-- Policy and institutional reform: How has the emergency affected ongoing food strategy plans and price restructuring efforts? How has the emergency intervention strengthened the capacity of the government to respond more effectively to future emergencies?

3.9 Policy Issues

The following issues are complex and deserving of separate studies in themselves. Yet they are extremely important in thinking about programming options and provide a useful backdrop for discussions. As appropriate, the team should address these concerns in the context of recommendations for program improvement/redesign and lessons learned:

-- Relative effectiveness (impact and costs) of various distribution modes (e.g., community free distribution, maternal and child health supplementary feeding programs, food for work, monetization, triangular transactions, rehabilitation activities) and consideration of alternative distribution mechanisms

-- Comparative advantage and cost-effectiveness of different food distribution channels (WFP, PVOs, host governments) and criteria for selecting among them

-- Linkages with regular food aid programs and other development assistance activities

-- How food emergency programs can be planned to support sector and macroeconomic policy reforms and strengthen food self-reliance, disaster prevention, and longer term development initiatives

-- Criteria for determining when and how emergency programs should be phased in and out

-- Opportunities and constraints presented by the "chronic food emergency syndrome" with regard to funding mechanisms, multiyear planning, program design, conditionality requirements, and the like

4. EVALUATION APPROACH AND DURATION

All team members will meet in Washington, D.C. during the first week of the assessment to review and clarify the scope of work, develop field protocols for site visits and interviews with local officials and program participants, and hold discussions with key A.I.D., USDA, State Department, OMB, and PVO officials.

After this prefield analysis is completed, the study teams will proceed to the country to carry out field investigations: reviewing additional documentation; interviewing key U.S. Mission, host government, PVO, and other donor officials; and inspecting appropriate field sites. Specific attention should be devoted to capturing the perceptions of program participants, either through structured interviews or informal conversations in their own language. The fieldwork will be carried out in approximately 18 working days per team member. If feasible, country studies should be scheduled in an iterative manner so

that the approach can be tested and refined through the evaluation process.

Upon return from the field, each team will review its findings and will prepare a draft country report. When all the country studies have been completed, Mission comments received, and the final reports prepared, the Contractor's core technical staff will prepare a synthesis of findings and recommendations, drawing out lessons learned about what works, what does not work, and why, from both the operational and policy perspectives.

USAID Missions would be expected to collect all existing data and reports and other relevant records for the team before their arrival. In those instances where in-house or local contractor capability are available, USAID Missions might conduct interviews with program participants in advance of the team's arrival. To the extent possible, USAID Missions should provide logistic support for the team while in-country.

5. COUNTRY SELECTION

Up to four countries will be selected on the basis of data availability, mix of distribution mechanisms and implementing organizations, type of beneficiary population, and government approaches/policies. The receptivity of USAID Missions/host governments, the ease of travel, and the representativeness of the emergency situation should also be taken into account. Because of the difficulty in operationalizing concepts such as "recovery," "rehabilitation," and "transition from relief to long-term development," the selection of programs and countries is critical to capturing the range of existing or potential experience.

6. TEAM COMPOSITION AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

In conducting these country assessments, the contractor will provide at least three specialists per country. Given the range of skills required to carry out this scope of work and the short time frame, the background of these specialists will vary according to the case in question, but must include all of the following areas of expertise:

- -- Language skills and country-specific experience
- -- Agricultural economics
- -- Public health/nutrition
- -- Social anthropology
- -- Food logistics
- -- Policy analysis/program design/evaluation

At least one of the team members, most probably the team leader, will be on the contractor's core technical staff. While continuity in the evaluation team is assumed, it is not essential

for the same consultants to go to all countries.

7. REPORTS

The team will submit a report on each country study as well as a synthesis containing an analysis of those factors that appear to determine program effectiveness, recommendations on how A.I.D. can improve its programming of emergency food aid, and lessons learned. Before departure from each country the team will have engaged all concerned parties (A.I.D., WFP, other donors, host country, PVOs) in a dialogue concerning their findings and recommendations. The draft country reports are due in A.I.D./Washington no later than 2 weeks after each team has return to the United States. Five copies will be delivered. Missions will be asked to complete their reviews and respond with comments by cable within 2 weeks of receiving the draft. The final report (including an executive summary and synthesis of findings, recommendations, and lessons learned) will then be prepared and ready for print within 2 weeks of receiving all Mission comments. Ten copies of this report will be delivered. Any translation of the report will be the Mission's responsibility.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARIES OF THE THREE COUNTRY STUDIES: SUDAN, MALI, AND CHAD

1. SUDAN

1.1 Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The principal purposes of the Sudan evaluation were to assess the timeliness, appropriateness, and impact of the 1984-1985 food emergency assistance efforts; recommend measures for improving future U.S. emergency food assistance and disaster relief programs; and consider measures for improving the design of emergency food programs in Africa by relating them more closely to national food strategies, including rehabilitation and longer term development.

The generic scope of the evaluation (see Appendix A) illustrates the many issues considered during the course of the preparation, fieldwork, and writing of the evaluation report.

For its evaluation methodology, the team depended on reviews of secondary sources, interviews, and observations in both Washington, D.C. and Sudan.

1.2 The 1984-1985 Food Emergency in Sudan: Setting and Constraints

Sudan, a huge underdeveloped country, was ill-equipped to

respond to major food emergencies. The size of the United States east of the Mississippi, Sudan has a population of 21.5 million and a literacy rate of only 15 percent (25 percent for men and 5 percent for women). Sudan's climate is difficult and in the past few years has led to inadequate food supplies in the vulnerable regions of the country.

Extremely weak communications and transport are major barriers to development and to emergency responses. Sudan has only 1,396 miles of paved roads (Washington, D.C. has 1,100 miles) and a system of unpaved roads and marked tracks, much of which is impassible in the rainy season (June through September).

Deeply in debt (about US$9.0 billion), Sudan has faced an acute shortage of foreign exchange during the last few years. Exports were down 50 percent in 1985. Inflation has been about 15 percent annually for the last 4 or 5 years. Overall the Government of Sudan's financial situations is not good.

The Government of Sudan has been weak and unstable. The coup d'etat on April 7, 1985 and civil disorder have hindered the Government's ability to respond to development and emergency needs. Moreover, the management and administrative capability of the Government of Sudan has been inadequate to deal effectively with the problems of such a vast, poor nation. Recent decentralization increased the difficulty of coordination between the Central Government and the regional governments.

1.3 The 1984-1985 Food Emergency

The 1984-1985 crop year was the fourth year of a drought that grew in severity each year. In comparison to the 1980-1981 good crop year, 1981-1982 food grain production (sorghum, millet, and wheat) was 63 percent, 1982-1983 production was 57 percent, and 1983-1984 production was only 40 percent. During 1984-1985, USAID estimates of Sudan's "at-risk" population suffering seriously from lack of food increased from 1 million to 6-9 million. The rural population was particularly vulnerable to food shortages going into the fourth year of the drought.

This was unusual for Sudan, which in normal years is a food surplus country that exports sorghum. Sudan had not had a continuing major drought for 20 to 25 years. As a result, there were no early warning systems, food emergency preplanning units, or other famine relief mechanisms in place from previous droughts.

1.4 The Massive U.S. and Other Donor Emergency Relief Effort

The 1984-1985 emergency food problem in Sudan increased continually until a truly massive relief effort was undertaken. In March 1984, The USAID Mission alerted A.I.D./Washington to the emergency food problem. In June 1984, the Mission requested 67,000 metric tons (MT) of Title II emergency food. By March 1985, just 10 months later, the Mission's total requests for emergency food had increased to 837,000 MT -- 817,000 MT of sorghum for general feeding and 20,000 MT of food for

supplemental feeding programs. A.I.D./Washington approvals followed a similar pattern, rising from 82,000 MT in September 1984 to 507,000 MT in April 1985. In addition, A.I.D./Washington approved Title I shipments of 315,000 MT in FY 1985 to meet urban food needs.

In coordination with other donors, the United States took responsibility for the food emergency in the Kordofan and Darfur regions in the west, where a large portion of the at-risk population was located. USAID's goal for its emergency food assistance effort was to supply adequate rations to all those at risk in their villages in a timely manner. Its strategy was to pre-position food near the at-risk population prior to the beginning of the June 1985 rainy season, contracting a private sector trucking company, the Sudanese Railroad Corporation, and private voluntary organizations (CARE and Save the Children UK) to transport and distribute the food. The Government of Sudan's involvement was limited to providing the contracting mechanism for private sector transport and counterpart funds to finance the transport. At the local level, the relief effort relied on village leaders to allocate food.

The evaluation team concentrated on Western Sudan, which was an area of prime U.S. responsibility. Time constraints did not permit examination of the Mission's support for other areas of Sudan, which the team understands went well, such as in the Kassala province in the Eastern region and in the Northern and Red Sea Hills areas. The USAID Mission also worked closely with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure adequate food supplies for the refugee program.

1.5 Evaluation Results

A.I.D.'s food emergency assistance effort made a critical difference for millions of hungry people, but it could have had even greater impact and been more cost-effective. A.I.D.'s emergency food assistance made a critical difference in the lives of millions of Sudanese, who in 1984-1985 did not have enough to eat. A massive program undertaken in a country where food emergencies are infrequent, the USAID Mission and A.I.D./Washington efforts deserve much praise for having overcome many major constraints as the emergency situation unfolded. As a result, over 1.0 million MT of emergency food was brought into Sudan and sold in urban areas or distributed among the rural people, some in very inaccessible areas. Many lives were saved and much suffering was alleviated by this food assistance. Overall, AID undertook a major effort and performed well under the circumstances.

The evaluation team's main task was to determine how such an immense emergency food assistance undertaking could be improved if another such crisis occurred in Sudan or elsewhere. This required a review of achievements and shortcomings and a sharp eye for ways of improving performance. This bias in the evaluation toward improvement should not detract from the major successes achieved by A.I.D. in Sudan in 1984-1985.

A.I.D.'s emergency food assistance program did not fully achieve its goal regarding quantity, timeliness, or

appropriateness of food distributed. Its program could have had even more impact and been more cost-effective had timing, management, preparation for unforeseen events, and impact been dealt with more successfully. Lessons learned in these areas can fruitfully be applied in dealing with Sudan's 1986 food emergency.

1.5.1 Timing

The 1984-1985 emergency food program was not carried out in a timely manner.

Findings

- AID was unable to pre-position needed food prior to the rainy season. This meant that USAID/Sudan had to move large quantities of food in the rainy season, an extremely difficult task, leading to serious delays and shortfalls in getting food to needy people.

- A.I.D.'s request-approval cycle did shorten during the 1984-1985 period, but it still took nearly 12 months between each USAID request and the full distribution of the approved emergency food in Sudan.

- The timeliness of the overall emergency food effort was diminished because other donors, international agencies, or the Government of Sudan could not follow through on time on their mutually arranged share of responsibility.

Conclusions

- The timeliness of A.I.D.'s emergency food assistance in Sudan can be improved, especially by preplanning, earlier assessment of needs, development of a planned critical path (action plan), pre-positioning of food prior to the rainy season, and effective donor coordination.

- A.I.D.'s problems in resolving the timeliness issue lessened the positive impact of emergency food because it decreased the overall volume of food distributed when it was most needed, resulting in less food getting to people in difficult-to-reach areas and slowing the initiation of supplemental feeding and health activities.

Recommendations

- Timeliness should be at or near the top of A.I.D.'s priority list when dealing with the 1986 food emergency because it is central to effective program impact.

  Timeliness should be improved for A.I.D. and the Government of Sudan through preplanning, earlier and more detailed planning (including donor coordination) at the first sign of a food emergency, and pre-positioning of

food prior to the rainy season in at-risk areas. The Government of Sudan's capability to carry out early warning and preplanning activities should be strengthened.

-- Within A.I.D., timeliness should be improved by making key decisions quickly. A separate A.I.D. emergency decision/action track should be established to achieve this.

1.5.2 Management

Emergency food assistance program management by the USAID Mission and A.I.D./Washington was good given the circumstances, but it could be improved.

Findings

-- The food emergency in Sudan was unplanned, complex, and chaotic, requiring quick and decisive action. It was particularly amenable to the application of good management practices and experienced personnel.

-- USAID management comprised a small cadre of existing Mission personnel who had no experience in implementing emergency food programs.

-- A.I.D.'s normal management system did not allow sufficient flexibility and speed to deal with the emergency successfully.

-- The bulk of A.I.D.'s efforts to coordinate with other donors took place at the country level, which burdened the USAID Mission with primary coordinating responsibility, even though most of the decisions by other donors and international agencies were made in their own capital cities.

-- USAID's use of the private sector, local governments, and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) to help manage and implement parts of the program was successful.

-- The USAID Mission did not try to link the food emergency with long-term development activities in a substantial way.

Conclusions

-- A.I.D. management of the Sudan food emergency could have been improved by using sufficient experienced personnel and a more flexible, speedy decision-making process.

-- The performance of other donors and international agencies was an important determinant of A.I.D.'s overall success; however, too much responsibility was left to the Mission.

-- The USAID Mission's strategy of using the private sector, local governments, and PVOs was effective and would have worked even better but for the rainy season. The strategy resulted in increased private sector, PVO, and local government activity and strengthened indigenous capacity to assist in the feeding programs.

-- The failure to link food emergency efforts and longer term development led to very late rehabilitation responses (such as provision of sorghum seed) despite in situ feeding.

Recommendations

-- A.I.D./Washington should refine its management of food emergencies in Sudan rather than trying to use existing management personnel, practices, and systems. It should focus, via an early management review, on the sufficiency and experience of management personnel and the adequacy of intended management practices in each food emergency.

-- A.I.D. should provide sufficient experienced personnel to USAID/Sudan when it must deal with food emergencies. A computerized A.I.D. roster listing such Agency personnel should be developed.

-- A.I.D./Washington should take major responsibility for the coordination of donors and international agencies involved in assisting Sudan with its food emergency in 1986.

-- USAID/Sudan should extend and improve its strategy of using the private sector, local governments, and PVOs to help manage and implement its emergency food program in 1986.

-- USAID/Sudan should plan its emergency food assistance in 1986 in the context of longer term development from the very beginning. Particular attention should be given to food-for-work activities and the long-run issue of whether people should be encouraged to remain in the arid North.

1.5.3 Impact

The 1984-1985 emergency food assistance made a critical difference for beneficiaries, but food arrived later than needed and in insufficient amounts to meet minimum needs.

Findings

-- Sudan was already experienced in handling Title I and III assistance, which readily expanded to meet the needs of city dwellers during the 1984-1985 drought.

-- Rural people received too little food too late to meet their needs. Those in easy-to-reach areas got more food

sooner than those in inaccessible areas.

-- By November 1985, the program had reached even remote villages with some food. Some of these villages were accessible during the rainy season only by helicopter.

-- The available data were inadequate (especially longitudinal data) to enable rigorous assessment of program impacts.

-- The Sudanese people used many strategies to stay alive. They ate famine foods; sold their jewelry, cattle, and farm implements; purchased food in urban areas; sent household members to town to work so they could buy food; relied on their extended families for food handouts; or lived temporarily with extended family members or migrated to towns or camps where food was more available.

-- By the end of the 1985 drought year, most people seriously affected by the drought had exhausted their reserves -- jewelry, seed stocks, extended family welcome, famine foods, and, in many cases, their own nutritional status. Their 1984-1985 harvest plus emergency food supplies will determine how they fare in 1986.

-- With the advent of rehabilitation efforts, a better 1984-1985 crop, and the existence of some people still in need of food, food-for-work programs by PVOs could be initiated. Numerous food-for-work projects would be consonant with A.I.D.'s long-term development program.

-- General feeding was not programmed jointly with supplemental feeding or health inputs. Supplemental feeding was initiated late in the 1984-1985 period, and health inputs were never seriously introduced, amounting to only US$0.02 per person in the serious at-risk category.

-- Monetization of Title II food did not work well because of lack of accountability for sales proceeds and lack of distribution and financial controls, which led to diversions of emergency food supplies from rural beneficiaries to town markets.

-- The rations used were consistent with the diet of the beneficiaries.

-- PVOs were important to good program impact because they effectively identified needy people and distributed food to them on a consistent basis.

-- The private sector helped ensure program impact by getting major quantities of food to beneficiaries. Private sector distribution diminished program impact because food was delivered to easy-to-reach sites first and inaccessible areas were avoided. (This resulted from the loose terms of the contract with the private sector trucking company.)

- Rural people were able to stay in their villages, and the emergency food program contributed substantially to this achievement.

Conclusions

- The food delivered to rural beneficiaries was very important and made a critical difference in keeping many of them alive and in their villages. It was, however, not adequate to meet all of their requirements; it met the short-run needs of many just as their other reserves were becoming exhausted. Thus, its marginal value was extremely high.

- Beneficiaries had much deeper reserves, or better traditional coping systems, than anticipated. Thus, even though A.I.D. arrived late with too little food, fewer appear to have died than expected.

- Some of the at-risk population needs to catch up in order to overcome some of the negative impacts of the inadequate food deliveries during 1984-1985 and the excessive reductions of their reserves. Supplemental feeding and food for work are appropriate mechanisms to assist in this process.

- The slow start of supplemental feeding and the lack of health inputs as companions to general feeding lessened the positive impact of the program, especially on disadvantaged groups -- children, lactating mothers, and the aged.

- Targeting particular groups in need, even during the worst of the pressures of the emergency, would have improved the impact of the program.

- The lack of timeliness of the program reduced its impact by reducing the overall availability of food when it was needed, by not adequately meeting the needs of those in inaccessible areas, and by delaying the introduction of supplemental feeding.

- USAID/Sudan developed an appropriate ration based on foods people were used to eating, a selection that increased the impact of the program.

- Additional data are necessary to adequately assess program impacts.

- Being fed in their villages enabled farmers to take immediate advantage of the June to September 1985 rains and to quickly re-enter economic activity.

- Management of in situ free distribution programs by PVOs and local governments in 1985 was good. This provides a basis for better future targeting of beneficiaries, experimental use of monetization, and some food-for-work projects. The latter would explicitly link emergency food assistance to long-term development and encourage USA.I.D./Sudan to plan accordingly.

Recommendations

- -- Improving the timeliness of food emergency assistance should be a high-priority means of improving program impact in 1986.

- -- Aggressive donor coordination should be undertaken in 1986, especially by A.I.D./Washington, to improve overall program impact.

- -- Private sector participation, while an excellent strategy element, should be better controlled in 1986 to enable continual targeting of the most needy by the emergency food assistance program manager.

- -- General and supplemental feeding and health inputs should be planned and implemented together in 1986 to increase the impact of the program on the most vulnerable and needy in the at-risk population.

- -- Supplemental feeding should be continued in 1986 until USAID/Sudan is assured that the severely at-risk population has sufficiently recouped its reserves, including some on-farm food stocks, and is thus no longer at risk.

- -- PVOs should continue to be used in 1986 to distribute food to ensure good program impact.

- -- In situ feeding should be continued in 1986 to achieve maximum program impact, but it should be carefully targeted. Food-for-work projects run by PVOs in cooperation with village leaders should be linked directly to USAID/Sudan's long-term development strategy.

- -- The attempt to monetize Title II food in 1984-1985 should be examined by USAID/Sudan and lessons learned distilled from the experience. Based on these lessons learned and its success in other countries, monetization should be tried again in 1986, despite past difficulties with it in Sudan.

- -- Two studies should be undertaken in 1986. First, baselines should be established in the areas where PVOs will be working. Second, the phenomenon of famine foods and the other traditional coping methods that allowed Sudanese to survive beyond the Mission's most optimistic assessment should be studied.

1.5.4 Unforeseen Situations

Numerous unanticipated events adversely affected A.I.D.'s emergency food program, some of which could have been better planned for and responded to.

Findings

-- Substantial planning for pre-positioning food prior to the rainy season went into the 1984-1985 emergency food assistance effort. However, little useful contingency planning was carried out, and an alternative action plan was never prepared after pre-positioning became impossible.

-- Once pre-positioning was no longer possible, Murphy's Law seemed to take effect, and the Mission's strategy began to unravel.

Conclusions

-- Substantial planning was carried out by USAID/Sudan at the beginning of the 1984-1985 period. But much went wrong anyway.

-- USAID/Sudan could have controlled for some of the unforeseen events by developing contingency plans, installing better management practices, improving available information, providing extra time and funding in the program, and involving others (such as other donors, the private sector, and PVOs) to share the risk of the implementation tasks.

Recommendations

-- USAID/Sudan should develop contingency plans in advance for changes in conditions or events that would substantially affect program impact in 1986.

-- The information base for planning and decision-making should be improved in critical areas (e.g., baseline nutritional status, logistics capacity).

-- A margin for error should be applied to 1986 program areas where full contingency planning is not undertaken.

-- Local control should be expanded whenever possible, and local people/organizations should be given enough resources to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

1.5.5 A.I.D.'s Strategy for Emergency Food Assistance in Sudan

A.I.D.'s 1986 strategy is appropriate, but accomplishing it successfully while meeting U.S. interests and the needs of Sudanese beneficiaries will be difficult.

Findings

-- The United States has informed the U.N. and, through the U.N., the other donors that it plans to provide only up to 50 percent of the aid needed in 1986.

-- There is a serious danger of repeating in 1986 one of the major causes of difficulty in 1985: not pre-positioning food before the rainy season.

- First, no one is certain of the size of the Sudanese 1985-1986 harvest. This has delayed USAID/Sudan's and A.I.D./Washington's actions in setting and approving firm food import targets.

- Second, the United Nations Office of Emergency Operations/Sudan (UNEOS) may not be able to find sufficient food and financing to meet its 50-percent target.

Conclusions

-- Although shifting the central responsibility for emergency food assistance to the U.N. is appropriate, accomplishing this change successfully will require donor cooperation and early decision-making about Sudan's 1986 emergency food needs. The U.N. also must carry out its role in the 1986 activities effectively, or the United States will have to return to the situation in a major way or stand by while many of Sudan's poorest people face food emergency conditions without help.

-- U.S. support of the U.N.'s role in Sudan will be central to the success of the U.S. strategy for dealing with the anticipated 1986 food emergency.

-- The inability to estimate the size of each annual harvest before the harvest is in creates intense timing problems in implementing Sudan's food emergency assistance because donors are unwilling to make decisions based on incomplete crop information.

Recommendations

-- A.I.D. should prepare immediately a time-phased action plan to successfully deliver, before the rainy season in June, the "up-to-50 percent" of the food needs that the United States is prepared to provide in 1986.

-- A.I.D./Washington should review the PVO programs for 1986 already submitted by USAID/Sudan and, after necessary modifications are made, approve them as soon as possible.

-- A.I.D./Washington should consider, without delay, the USAID/Sudan proposal to turn over to the World Food Program (WFP) the 100,000 MT of Title II sorghum sent out under the 1984-1985 program.

- If A.I.D./Washington approves, it should work with U.N. headquarters to ensure that the funding necessary to distribute the sorghum is made available to WFP.

- If A.I.D./Washington does not transfer the sorghum, the grain should be used for feeding, and the excess pre-positioned prior to the rainy season.

-- The UNEOS in New York should be urged to develop immediately a time-phased action plan to obtain its share of the 50 percent of 1986 emergency food needs from other donors. A.I.D./Washington and the Department of State, through appropriate diplomatic channels, should help UNEOS persuade major donors to respond to the U.N. adequately and in a timely fashion.

-- USAID/Sudan should work with the Government of Sudan and UNEOS to produce, by the end of December 1985, the agreed-on crop estimates and a firm recommendation on local purchase of sorghum, or any appropriate variation (e.g., a mix of sorghum and millet).

-- The UNEOS and USAID/Sudan should start now to develop an operational rehabilitation/long-term development plan for 1986.

1.6 Generic Principles for Planning and Implementing Emergency Food Programs

The following is a tentative list of generic principles for planning and implementing emergency food assistance efforts, drawn from the Sudanese context.

1. Preplanning is crucial; once an emergency is evident there is never enough time to prepare.

2. Timing is everything; decisions should be made early and should be definitive.

3. Information is always insufficient; decide anyway.

4. Adequacy is central; do not under-resource.

5. Flexibility is necessary; do not be afraid to try a new approach.

6. Emergencies take place in the context of longer-term development; relate emergency assistance to long-term development.

7. The government may not provide the best implementing agency; try the private sector.

8. General and supplementary feeding and health inputs go together; package them appropriately.

9. Droughts have stages; plan and implement accordingly.

10. Even the best efforts sometimes fail; have a backup plan.

11. Impact is ephemeral; monitor and evaluate it carefully.

12. Management is fundamental; ensure its excellence.

2. MALI

2.1 Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The purposes of the evaluation were to analyze the impact, timeliness, and appropriateness of the 1984-1985 emergency food aid efforts in Mali and to derive recommendations of practical measures to improve future programming and impact. In addition, the evaluation considered ways of programming for emergency food assistance in Mali to support national food strategies, including rehabilitation and longer term development.

The generic scope of the evaluation (Appendix A) illustrates the many issues considered during the course of the preparation, fieldwork, and writing of the report.

For its evaluation methodology, the team depended on reviews of secondary sources, interviews, and observations in both Washington, D.C. and Mali.

2.2 The Country Setting

Mali is a drought-prone, food-deficit country, with a chronic dependence on food aid and a well-established pattern of cooperation among major food aid donors. Mali has been dependent on imports of cereals to meet its food requirement since the early 1970s. Most of the country lies in the Sahelian and Sahelian-Guinean zones, where short and highly variable rainfall results in frequent droughts and where grazing and farming are high-risk occupations.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, major donors have participated in a common project, the Mali Project for Grain Trade. Donors provide food aid within a structural adjustment context; in return for the food aid, the Government of Mali has agreed to policy and program measures to restructure the cereals market, improve operations of the Grain Marketing Board (OPAM), and provide increased incentives for food production.

2.3 The 1984-1985 Drought

Overall, the 1984-1985 drought was the worst on record. Famine threatened much of the rural population as the country faced the largest food grain deficit in its history. The rural population was particularly vulnerable because farm food stocks and other resources of herders and farmers were close to exhaustion after 4 to 5 successive years of drought.

Disaster areas extended to all of Regions VI and VII, most of Region V, and the northern portions of Regions I, II, and IV.

These areas include the country's traditional breadbasket in the inner delta of the Niger River. The delta area (20,000 km2) was affected not only by poor rainfall in the fall of 1984, but also by the extremely low levels of river flooding. Region III, in the favorable Sudano-Guinean rainfall belt, did not suffer crop or pasture failures, but a large number of migrants entered the area for food, shelter, and work.

Because Mali is a food-deficit country, it was used to seeking food aid to meet its structural deficit and to provide emergency food for free distribution. But the severity and wide-spread occurrence of the drought, combined with the exhaustion of rural resources, presented the Government with a problem of major dimensions: how to organize a massive effort for distribution in difficult-to-reach rural areas.

2.4 The U.S. Role in Helping Mali Plan and Carry Out an Effective Program of Free Food Distribution in Rural Areas

The A.I.D. goals were to help the Government of Mali provide sufficient food to ensure social stability in the urban areas, preserve the rural structure, and avoid famine among the needy. The strategy adopted by USAID/Mali was (1) to use the well-established mechanism of OPAM public distribution for sales in urban markets; (2) to use in-country private voluntary organizations (PVOs) to manage free distribution to needy populations in rural areas; and (3) to work for close donor cooperation with the Government. The following were the specific objectives:

- -- Provide cereals to those with purchasing power at reasonable prices without disrupting the market for local production
- -- Provide cereals to those without purchasing power, especially in rural areas
- -- Permit people to stay in their villages and grazing areas
- -- Provide sufficient food over a long enough period to enable farmers to plant a crop in 1985

Ensuring food supplies for the urban population, even though it was swollen by migrants from the countryside, was relatively easy. Distribution mechanisms developed in prior years for commercial and food-aid import sales were well established and reliable. U.S. food aid for urban distribution during 1984-1985 was 35,000 MT.

Providing food for the rural areas, however, was the difficult task. It meant targeting and managing distribution plans covering hundreds of thousands of people in scattered, difficult-to-reach rural communities. The solution to the problem was worked out cooperatively by the Government of Mali with USAID/Mali and other donors. The innovative approach involved mobilizing in-country PVOs and international organizations as agents for the Government of Mali in managing emergency distribution of government-owned, donor-contributed

grain to rural areas. Under the program, PVOs received grain from OPAM warehouses and arranged for its transport and delivery in accordance with distribution plans worked out with regional and local authorities. The Government of Mali estimated requirements for this program at 60,000 MT. The United States programmed 40,300 MT in support of this effort as government-to-government emergency food and grants. A.I.D. also financed the costs of grain delivery to OPAM storage/distribution points as well as the transportation costs of PVOs for moving U.S. grain.

In all, the United States allocated 95,000 MT of food to Mali between November 1984 and October 1985. This represented -- with the nonfood aid support component -- a US$46 million investment, compared with an annual development program of about US$15 million per year.

2.5 General Findings

The evaluation shows that the mechanisms for commercial and emergency food distribution were well conceived and worked to provide badly needed food to millions of people. In rural areas, over two million persons benefited from free distributions of U.S. grain in 1985.

However, food needs for rural areas were seriously under-estimated by the Malian Government and donors. As a result, early deliveries fell considerably short of the amount needed. The consequent human suffering cannot be accurately evaluated because of lack of data, although it was extensive and severe in many areas during March-July 1985.

The evaluation found that U.S. intervention and assistance was decisive in helping Mali avert massive famine and rural exodus and sufficient to achieve substantially the objectives cited above. Several measures to improve the cost-effectiveness of future U.S. emergency food aid in Mali are presented below.

2.6 Evaluation Results

Findings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented on the timing, management, and impact of the U.S. emergency effort in Mali.

2.6.1 Timing

Timing was a critical factor in the 1984-1985 program in Mali, affecting both the impact and cost-effectiveness of the U.S. effort. Not enough food was available for emergency distribution during the March-July period.

Findings

- Not enough food was available for emergency distribution in the period (March-June) before the rains or during the first part of the rainy season in July and early August.

- Six months elapsed between the initial USAID/Mali

request
for emergency food assistance and the arrival of assistance at port. The time required for the supplemental appropriation for the African Hunger Relief Initiative contributed to delays in organizing emergency distributions needed at the beginning of March 1986.

-- Nonavailability of emergency food during March-June was partly due to unforeseen delays in delivery of food aid from the ports and lack of contingency planning.

-- Distribution problems were compounded and costs were increased by the need to move the bulk of emergency food destined for remote and inaccessible areas during the rainy season (July-September).

Conclusions

-- The timing of shipments and deliveries of emergency food aid for distribution through commercial channels to urban centers is less critical than the timing for supply of food aid for free distribution in rural areas.

-- Food aid for free distribution in Mali can be supplied most cost effectively and with greater impact by delivery for distribution and pre-positioning during March June before the heavy rains.

-- Early repair of the highways linking Mali's Region VII with Niger would provide a practical alternatives for supply of that region.

Recommendations

-- In the event of severe food emergencies, A.I.D. should plan to ship the bulk of its emergency food aid to Mali between
February and May for distribution and pre-positioning during March-June.

-- A.I.D. should work with other donors to help the Government
of Mali maintain its National Food Security Stocks in readiness for emergency food needs.

-- In the event of a food emergency affecting Region VII, the United States should be prepared to assist in early repairs to the highways linking Region VII with Niger.

2.6.2 Management

Management was the critical issue in the 1984-1985 U.S. program. The problem for the Government of Mali and USAID/Mali was how to effectively manage emergency distributions for hundreds of thousands of families in thousands of isolated communities. USAID/Mali played a significant role in helping Mali address this problem.

Findings

- -- Improved organization and management of emergency food distributions resulted in a U.S. program effectively targeted to significantly relieve the threat of famine for several hundred thousand rural families. PVO and international organization management of local distributions of U.S. emergency food aid during 1984-1985 was well executed; distributions of available food were well targeted on needy persons in hard-hit areas. Losses and misuse of food were small.

- -- A second critical management problem facing the Government of Mali, A.I.D., and other donors was the difficulty of obtaining accurate information on food shortages and needs of disaster areas. Both the extent of the drought and the need for emergency food in rural areas were underestimated by USAID and the Government of Mali. The needs assessment system failed to provide the Government of Mali, A.I.D., and other donors with the information needed to plan and manage the program for maximum cost-effectiveness.

- -- USAID/Mali resources for planning, organizing, and managing the U.S. emergency food assistance programs were strained, as were those of the Government. The Food for Peace staff of the A.I.D. Regional Economic Development Services Office (REDSO) was fully occupied managing transshipments from West African ports to Mali and other Sahelian countries and was unable to provide guidance or assistance.

- -- Donor efforts were well-coordinated at the national level. However, planning for emergency distribution in disaster areas (i.e., administrative cercles) was largely ad hoc and often uncoordinated.

Conclusions

- -- The Mali emergency food program of 1984-1985 overcame serious program deficiencies experienced during previous years. An important byproduct of the strategy of using PVOs to help manage emergency food distributions is that several PVOs are now better able to provide assistance for relief, rehabilitation, and development.

- -- Improved needs assessment is critical for planning and managing timely emergency food and disaster relief programs in Mali.

- -- USAID's increased access to experienced personnel for designing and managing emergency food programs will improve program impact and cost-effectiveness and will help USA.I.D./Mali maintain effective management of on going development activities.

- -- REDSO played a valuable and strategic role in coordinating

and expediting transshipments of food aid. Increased availability of REDSO staff to advise and guide the Missions would help improve the management of U.S. food emergency programs in Mali and the rest of West Africa.

-- Greater use can be made of Malian local institutions to strengthen needs assessment (at less cost) for disaster relief planning and to manage local rehabilitation and development.

Recommendations

-- A.I.D. and USAID/Mali should give high priority to helping Mali improve its system of needs assessment.

-- USAID/Mali and the Government of Mali should design emergency food aid programs to tap increasingly the capabilities and local knowledge of Mali's regional, district, and local authorities to plan and carry out such programs, with assistance and guidance from PVOs.

-- A.I.D. should gear up to provide experienced personnel to assist USAID Missions in the Sahel when needed for food emergency and disaster relief planning and programming.
Such personnel should be available early in the planning cycle. A computerized A.I.D. roster of such personnel should be prepared. Indefinite quantity contracts should be negotiated to provide such personnel from the private sector when needed.

-- A.I.D. should test the option of shipment and transshipment using bills of lading (bulk shipments with bagging on arrival at West African ports) as a means of (1) transferring the work of transshipments from REDSO to the private sector; (2) reducing delays and costs; and (3) enabling REDSO personnel to provide guidance and assistance to West African governments and USAID Missions.

-- USAID/Mali should continue to support a strong Government of Mali role in coordinating donor emergency food relief assistance. Increased donor coordination should be sought in recovery and rehabilitation efforts.

2.6.3 Impact

The U.S. program was decisive in helping Mali avert massive rural famine and exodus, but emergency food needs for rural areas were underestimated and timeliness and lack of management resources were problems.

Findings

-- There was an effective melding of regular food and

emergency food aid through the Government of Mali's Annual Food Distribution Program.

-- The system for supplying food aid through commercial markets worked well to meet the needs of urban dwellers. Commercial marketing was important in helping meet the needs of migrants from rural areas. Monetization of Title II food grain worked well to augment supplies for urban consumers, including migrants, and to generate local currencies to cover costs of free distribution.

-- The need for emergency food supplies for rural areas was underestimated by at least 100 percent, and emergency food supplies were not programmed in time. Supplemental feeding of vulnerable populations was ad hoc and insufficient. The United States helped Mali establish an effective system of cholera treatment and control, but support of other health efforts was minimal. Only limited resources for rehabilitation and recovery were made available during 1984-1985. Food for work was largely limited to U.S. donations to the World Food Program (WFP).

-- Available U.S. food was effectively targeted. Rations were appropriate and large enough to make a significant contribution to relieving the threat of famine. Free distribution of U.S. food reached several hundred thousand families, an estimated two million persons. Because U.S. food reached the villages, rural dwellers were able to remain and plant a new crop in 1985. The U.S. effort accounted for about half the free food distribution program carried out by Mali's National Committee for Aid to Drought Victims (CNAVS) and PVOs with donor assistance.

-- The United States financed important studies to assess the drought situation in the country and to forecast the agricultural situation during 1985-1986.

Conclusions

-- The response of the United States and other donors was effective in meeting the needs of urban dwellers. Monetization of Title II food grain was an appropriate and useful technique to augment urban supplies, help meet the needs of urban migrants, and generate local resources to cover costs of free distribution.

-- Food supplies for free distribution were inadequate in the period March-June before the rainy season and during the early part of the rainy season. Free distributions of U.S. emergency food aid were well-targeted to needy families facing famine conditions throughout the country.
These distributions together with those of other donors helped Mali avert widespread famine and massive rural exodus.

-- U.S. emergency food programs in Mali and in other Sahelian countries will have more impact and will be more

cost-effective when food supplies are programmed to arrive between February and May for distribution and prepositioning during March-June.

-- In Mali supplemental feeding should be programmed as a standard procedure to accompany emergency food distributions in order to protect vulnerable populations and reduce immediate suffering and the long-term irreversible effects of malnutrition among the very young.

-- A more cohesive program of studies is needed to illuminate the food security and development problems and potentials of drought-prone areas in Mali.

-- Programming for recovery and rehabilitation should be carried out during the emergency relief phase of emergency food distribution programs and not be delayed until the end of the emergency relief effort. Important opportunities exist for food-for-work programs in the drought-prone areas of Mali.

Recommendations{1}

-- The United States should work with the Government of Mali and other donors for an earlier response to food emergencies and for timely delivery of food aid for emergency distribution in rural areas (as opposed to commercial distributions of food aid, which can be programmed more uniformly throughout the year).

-- As a standard operating procedure, the United States should design emergency food aid programs in Mali to include supplementary feeding programs, in cooperation with other donors and PVOs. The operations manual should be revised accordingly.

-- USAID/Mali should support, with other donors, a more comprehensive Government of Mali program of studies to increase knowledge of local conditions affecting populations in drought-prone areas and opportunities for local development and drought-proofing measures. Such studies should be an integral part of a system of drought planning.

-- A.I.D. should revise its guidelines and operational manuals to emphasize that short-term food emergencies are not simply episodes spanning 9 months; they normally involve recovery and rehabilitation efforts extending at least through the following year. Recovery and rehabilitation plans should be made early, before and during the relief operations.

-- USAID/Mali should support multiyear food-for-work programs
in Region VI and other drought-prone areas to be managed with the assistance of PVOs in close collaboration with the Regional Governors and cercle administrators.

{1} An attempt has been made to avoid repetition of recommendations derived from the sections on timing and management, for example, the recommendation for overhauling the needs assessment system of Mali.

2.7 Recommendations for Relating Emergency Assistance to Development

The following is a list of recommendations for planning and implementing emergency food assistance programs in Mali that are more closely related to national food strategies, including rehabilitation and development.

- -- View the emergency as a disruption in the development process and design the emergency food assistance or drought-relief program to help the country move back to the development track.

- -- Design the emergency food assistance and drought-relief programs to assist affected populations recover from the disaster/emergency as soon as possible.

- -- Use the experience to improve development programming and to increase practical knowledge about local conditions, needs for rehabilitation, drought-proofing possibilities, and local development potential.

- -- Build efficient/effective systems for drought detection and needs assessment. Note that basic food needs assessment data (crop yields, acreages, production, food consumption, stocks, and nutritional status) are also essential for development planning and programming.

- -- Design emergency food assistance and drought-relief programs to reinforce institution building (national, regional, district) and local/popular participation in relief, rehabilitation, and development.

- -- Integrate rehabilitation and recovery programs with local and regional development programs and plans.

- -- Design emergency food assistance and drought-relief programs to support private sector development, including the development of local PVOs.

- -- Ensure that the national food and development strategy properly addresses the problem of drought-prone areas and of drought-proofing such areas through appropriate structural and other adjustments in food and agricultural production and marketing.

- -- Institute more Government of Mali/food-for-work programs in collaboration with other donors, the WFP, and PVOs in Regions VI and VII and in other food-short, drought-prone areas of Mali.

3. CHAD

3.1 Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The principal purposes of the evaluation were to assess the timeliness, appropriateness, and impact of the 1984-1985 food emergency assistance efforts in Chad; recommend measures to improve future U.S. emergency food assistance and disaster relief programs in Chad; consider measures for improving the design of emergency food programs in Africa to relate them more closely to national food strategies, including rehabilitation and longer term development.

The generic scope of the evaluation (see Appendix A) illustrates the many issues considered during the course of the preparation, fieldwork, and writing of the evaluation report.

For its evaluation methodology, the team depended on reviews of secondary sources, interviews, and observations in both Washington, D.C. and Chad.

3.2 The 1984-1985 Food Emergency: Setting and Constraints

Chad is a large, landlocked, and underdeveloped country that was not equipped to respond to a serious food emergency on its own. Communications were a major problem, and the transport network was extremely weak. Both constituted important barriers to Chad's development and food emergency responses. Chad's financial and economic situation was very difficult, leaving little capacity to meet emergency requirements. Politically, although the situation improved in 1984-1985 compared with earlier years, substantial uncertainty remained.

3.3 The 1984-1985 Drought

The Food and Agriculture Organization/World Food Program (FAO/WFP) assessment mission in late 1984{2} estimated that about 1.5 million people in Chad were seriously suffering from lack of food, and 500,000 people were also displaced. The rural population had experienced four seasons of insufficient rain and, by late 1984, four inadequate harvests.

Cereal production in the Sahelien zone of Chad dropped steadily from an average of 220,000 MT for 1976-1978 to a record low of 82,000 MT in 1984, or 37 percent of the 1976-1978 average. Production in 1984 in the Sudanian zone was somewhat better, but reached only 86 percent of the 1976-1978 average. Civil strife and a scorched-earth policy also left many homeless, hungry, and unable to benefit from their land.

{2} Food and Agricultural Organization, Evaluation de la Situation de l'Alimentation, de l'Agriculture, et de l'Elevage au Tchad, OSRO Rapport No. 03/85/F (Rome: FAO, November 1985).

3.4 The 1984-1985 Famine-Relief Effort

The U.S. and other donors undertook a massive effort to feed those affected by famine in 1984-1985. Emergency food aid pledged by donors for 1984-1985 in Chad amounted to 210,000 MT. This was more than the emergency food aid from all sources for the 3 previous years. Food aid achieved by October 1985 totaled 178,000 MT. The value of food and other emergency assistance actually provided totaled US$113 million. By comparison, total development assistance from all donors was US$90 million, with France providing 37 percent.

Emergency food aid distributed during 1984-1985 was 126,828 MT (60 percent of the amount pledged). This was more than double the total distributed for the 2 previous years combined. Of the total 210,000 MT pledged, some 75,000 MT, or 36 percent, was of U.S. origin. Other major donors were France, the European Economic Community (EEC), Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Saudi Arabia. About 75 percent of total emergency food aid was delivered to the North and 25 percent to the South.

In the fall of 1985, there were 104 expatriates and 535 Chadians working directly on emergency assistance programs supported by international organizations, bilateral donors, and private voluntary organizations (PVOs).

A.I.D.'s emergency food sales program in N'Djamena and later in some of the provincial cities via the National Cereals Office (ONC) provided funds (some 2.0 billion CFA francs or US$5.7 million equivalent) to help run the emergency food assistance program.

3.5 Relief Effort Coordination

External assistance to Chad was more effective because of the success of the coordinating mechanism used. An effective operational-level coordination mechanism was implemented by the Government of Chad with the strong support of the World Food Program (WFP) and the United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO). It provided for action committees at the national and prefecture levels chaired by the Central Government, with full membership of donors and PVOs active in the emergency food assistance program. Distribution committees were also set up at the subprefecture and the canton levels, where major distributions were to take place. These committees, using mobile evaluation teams, determined priorities and worked out problems that arose concerning food distribution.

The important problem of coordinating food aid shipments to the ports and from the ports to Chad was effectively addressed by the WFP, which acted as the lead donor agency. A special ministry was established in 1983 to oversee the operation of the emergency food programs. This Ministry for Control of Natural Disasters (MLCCN) chaired the National Action Committee in N'Djamena. Thus, the Government of Chad maintained policy control of the emergency food assistance effort.

3.6 Evaluation Results

Overall, the 1984-1985 emergency food assistance program was carried out effectively, but there were shortcomings that reduced the impact and cost-effectiveness of the effort. A.I.D.'s emergency food assistance effort in Chad was of critical significance to hundreds of thousands of Chadians who did not have enough food. The efforts of those in the Government of Chad, A.I.D., and other organizations to initiate and implement the emergency program were, in many ways, extraordinary and are to be commended. However, this evaluation is intended to identify both achievements and shortcomings so that the latter can be corrected and future food emergencies can be dealt with even more successfully.

3.6.1 Timing

During late 1984 and early 1985, there was insufficient food in country to meet the requirements of needy families and individuals. The failure to have sufficient food in the right place at the right time diluted the effectiveness of the generally successful emergency food aid effort.

The timing problems experienced by the Government of Chad, A.I.D., and other donors are attributable to several factors. First, almost no early warning or emergency preparedness planning capability existed, even though 1984 followed 3 earlier drought years. Second, no one prepared contingency plans for a worst case scenario of another bad harvest year. Third, when the 1984 rains did fail, donors followed their customary practice (given the lack of early warning and pre-agreed emergency preparedness actions) of waiting until harvest data were in hand in October/November before declaring an emergency. Fourth, once a major emergency was declared, there were few organizations (e.g., PVOs) sufficiently committed and prepared to distribute the amount of food needed. As a result, responses to the food emergency were slow. However, despite these problems, a substantial portion of the estimated emergency food required in 1985 was distributed prior to the 1985 rainy season.

The severe food shortages and lack of rain in mid-1984 triggered substantial migration of rural Chadians in search of food by October/November 1984. When the Government realized the magnitude of the migration, it initiated policies and actions, assisted by PVOs, WFP, USAID/Chad, and other donors, to curb it. These efforts included evacuation of people from the environs of N'Djamena, the establishment of interim food distribution points on main routes to the capital, and the initiation of resettlement efforts and more in situ feeding. By December 1984, these efforts had eliminated most of the makeshift camps, but continued food shortages resulted in still more people migrating to resettlement areas.

The early warning system and emergency preparedness planning in Chad should be strengthened to help avoid the problems that occurred during 1984-1985. The Mission's planned financing of a food early warning system should be supported and an early

warning system manager should be appointed by the Government of Chad.

To alleviate the problem of late arrival of food when successive drought years occur, the Government of Chad and donors should agree on at-risk criteria that would trigger food movements prior to or when the rains fail, rather than when the size of the harvest is known with substantial certainty.

WFP and CARE headquarters should review their procedures together with A.I.D. to identify ways of shortening the time needed to respond to requests from their field offices.

3.6.2 Management

The Government of Chad, USAID/Chad, other donors, and PVOS managed their portions of the emergency food assistance effort well under difficult circumstances, but problems did arise that reduced the effectiveness of their efforts. As the 1984-1985 crisis emerged, USAID and other donors realized that the Government of Chad would need help in dealing effectively with the emergency. The Government and the donors agreed to use the WFP and PVOs to implement the emergency food program. The Government with the strong support of the WFP, established and controlled a network of action committees in which donors and PVOs were full members at the national, prefecture (state), and local levels. These committees were effective in resolving issues, organizing in-country food distribution, and generally ensuring better management of emergency food assistance activities. The Government's involvement in food emergencies should be expanded by building on its role in managing these committees.

The WFP had the lead donor agency role for overall logistics coordination and management during the emergency. Effective measures were implemented to establish an efficient logistical infrastructure system to deal with emergency food aid. These measures included such key actions as increasing and expediting food arrivals from Douala when Nigeria closed its borders, increasing ferrying capacity at the Chari/Logone and Mayo-Kebbi River crossings, and constructing the Bailey bridge at the Lere crossing of the Mayo-Kebbi River. The regional logistics bases also were important to the success of the effort. The operation of these bases should continue, and their services should be enhanced to cover recurrent costs. The expansion of the truck fleet was achieved, but not all the trucks brought into Chad served well over its rough terrain. Also, some delays in ordering trucks and lack of spare parts created extra expenses and diminished the timeliness of logistics support.

The provision of personnel and transport by A.I.D. in support of emergency activities was slowed by headquarters deliberations. More authority should be delegated to USAID/Chad to reduce this delay.

The U.S. emergency food sales program succeeded in Chad and led other donors to use the same mechanism in support of the overall effort. These programs, or a Title II Section 206 program, should be used to provide needed local currency for

food-for-work and other development efforts in 1986.

3.6.3 Impact

Emergency food assistance, although insufficient in late 1984 and early 1985, was targeted successfully to needy regions and to needy individuals and families and saved many lives. Where food was delivered through PVO or WFP programs directly to individuals and families, the recipients received larger quantities of food more regularly than those reached through general distributions. Thus, where possible, emergency food assistance should be provided through programs targeted to individuals and families. Where general distribution is used, it should include substantial monitoring and transport capacity at the local level.

Despite emergency food shipments, mortality increased significantly in Chad during 1984-1985. Emergency food, sharing of food, and a large yield of famine foods helped to reduce faminerelated mortality. However, it was impossible to determine the extent of the crisis or evaluate rigorously the impact of emergency food assistance because adequate baseline data were not available.

The 1981-1985 Chad famine occurred in stages, and people responded differently to each stage. These stages and the people's responses to them are important elements of famine relief planning and execution and should be taken into account by the Government of Chad and others in dealing with future food emergencies.

Resettlement programs were used successfully to keep people from creating makeshift camps. Such programs also had a major impact on farmers and nomads, some of whom appear to have adopted a new way of life. For example, new agricultural techniques taught during the relief effort helped beneficiaries adopt more productive practices. These programs were a resourceful way of limiting the formation of camps and of caring for displaced persons. They should be used in the short run to assist families who continue to be displaced in Chad.

3.6.4 Health and Nutrition

The Government of Chad depended on PVOs and donors to assess the health and nutrition needs resulting from the food emergency in Chad and to monitor changes in status during the relief effort. PVOs did an excellent job identifying priority geographical areas for emergency food distribution. Technical assistance and donor coordination helped mitigate some of the detrimental health aspects of the famine. However, lack of infrastructure greatly inhibited health assistance efforts. For example, vitamin A deficiency was neither assessed nor treated, and oral rehydration therapy could not be used extensively. Measures to deal with vitamin A deficiency should be implemented if it is determined to be a problem in future food emergencies. Likewise, child survival services such as vaccinations and oral rehydration therapy should be supported. Supplemental rations were sometimes the only food available. They should be distributed with a general ration.

Rapid nutritional surveillance results played a central role in determining the extent and severity of the Chadian famine and the need for emergency assistance. These techniques should be institutionalized as part of a national surveillance system.

3.6.5 Transition to Development

The shift from emergency relief to development was facilitated by mechanisms such as food for work and resettlement.

The transition needs to account for persons still at risk and the possibility of drought recurring in 1986. Pre-positioning of food will help protect against such an occurrence. If the rains fail again, a call forward of food may be necessary before complete harvest information becomes available. Donors should agree on criteria to trigger calls forward of food in such situations.

Special programs such as food for work and wadi resettlement are needed to facilitate the transition to development. These efforts should be encouraged, but their particular problems should be recognized and remedied. Thus, food-for-work programs should receive not only food, but also complementary resources for supervision, technical assistance, and equipment. Questions related to the longer term viability of wadi resettlement efforts, such as salinity, irrigation techniques, and market access, also should be studied carefully.

The Government of Chad and donors lacked a strategy for moving from the food emergency to development and for using food aid to facilitate that transition. Such a strategy should be developed and implemented, using Title II Section 206 and other planned and ongoing projects to support it.

3.7 Generic Principles and Recommendations

1. The host government has a critical role to play; be sure to involve it.

The Government should play a pivotal role in managing and coordinating the emergency effort. Even if the Government has limited resources at its disposal, it should not be bypassed in the decision-making process. Such an involvement is especially important in chronic-deficit countries in order to build an institutional emergency preparedness capacity to respond to future disasters.

2. An emergency situation provides opportunities for innovation and rebuilding; take advantage of them.

The pressures of an emergency situation can galvanize the energies of donors and governments alike to work together in imaginative and highly constructive ways that are not always possible under normal circumstances. This innovation should be encouraged. As the emergency situation abates, efforts should be made to ensure that these initiatives are solidified and carried

over into the longer term development efforts.

3. Intervene early to keep people at home.

An early warning system should be sensitive to socioeconomic indicators, such as migration patterns, changes in livestock and cereal prices, and herd movements. On-the-ground monitoring of this information can supplement remote-sensing technologies, crop assessment methods, and nutritional surveillance techniques to help predict disasters early enough to take preventive action.

4. There are many ways to distribute food; choose them wisely.

The type of intervention will vary depending on the stage of the famine, the timing of food and transport, the availability of nonfood inputs, the type of implementing organizations, and the level of monitoring required. All of these considerations need to be carefully analyzed in designing the most appropriate mix of assistance. Although logistical constraints are important, they alone should not determine the nature of the delivery mechanism. With sufficient advance planning, all of the critical factors can be adequately taken into account.

5. Food alone is not enough; get adequate funding.

The timing and appropriateness of complementary resources are as important as the arrival of the food component and should be given adequate planning. Despite the different funding sources and organizational structures, better coordination between food and cash resources is imperative.

6. Development and emergencies move at different speeds; remember to switch gears.

For emergency programs to respond quickly and efficiently, normal bureaucratic requirements designed for longer term development activities must be expedited or adapted. Special procedures, such as delegations of authority to Missions in the field, need to be considered to allow for the immediate mobilization of resources and appropriate delivery mechanisms.

7. Transition from emergency relief to development is complex; do not rush it.

In making the transition from emergency to development, it is essential to take into account the cumulative effect of several years of disaster, to understand the coping mechanisms individuals have used to deal with severe deprivation, and to assess adequately the possibilities for future self-sufficiency. Food and other assistance should not be withdrawn too quickly but should be organized in ways that are appropriate to the evolving situation. In this context, food for work can provide a necessary cushion while ensuring important linkages with longer term development objectives and avoiding unwanted disincentive effects of food aid.

8. Emergencies tend to build up a large infrastructure; take advantage of it.

When investing in substantial infrastructure, the recurrent costs of these operations should be planned for during the design phase, and alternate uses of these facilities during normal periods should be clearly defined. Food-for-work infrastructure, if properly planned and financed, can be used to provide supplementary income to the unemployed or underemployed; to create valuable long-term assets for the country, such as wells or roads; and most important, to serve in future emergency situations as a way of channeling food aid quickly and effectively at the village level.

9. Impact is elusive; try to capture it.

Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating impact should be made a part of emergency food assistance efforts. Additional data should be collected to determine the impact of emergency food programs. Preplanning should include data collection for baseline purposes.

10. There is no substitute for experience.

Managing food emergencies efficiently increases the potential for impact and reduces costs. A.I.D. should assess the management of each food emergency situation as it is declared and provide additional experienced personnel if needed to improve management. If adequate staff and financial resources are not available, alternative strategies should be explored.

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